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# The Effects of a Literacy-Based Mentoring Program on Empowering Preadolescent Girls in Their Development of Confidence, Self-Concept, and Leadership Skillset

Sophia Vincent

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The Effects of a Literacy-Based Mentoring Program on Empowering Preadolescent Girls in  
Their Development of Confidence, Self-Concept, and Leadership Skillset

Sophia Vincent

University of Arkansas

### Abstract

This study focuses on empowering preadolescent girls to develop confidence and move from a fixed to growth mindset, take responsibility for their actions, turn failures into learning opportunities, and cultivate a love for self. **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise** is a literacy-based mentoring program for preadolescent girls designed to improve confidence, positive self-concept, and develop a leadership skillset through five targeted aspects of leadership: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths. Adolescence is a time when students are discovering who they are and shaping their identities. Girls decline in their self-confidence during adolescence due to fear of failure, self-image, pressures of perfectionism, and comparison to peers. These factors create barriers for becoming strong girl leaders. In response to the challenges preadolescent girls face, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**, a literacy-based mentoring program, was designed to provide opportunities for preadolescent girls to develop confidence, improve self-concept, and become aware of personal leadership skills. The program curriculum is literacy-based, a powerful tool for exploring the identities of female characters and their response to life challenges within the chosen literature. **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise** is a five-week literacy-based, mentoring program for preadolescent girls in a middle school setting, and was implemented during the 2018 fall and 2019 spring semesters. A total of 68 participants met in an after-school program one day per week for three hours. This research study addresses the following question: *“What are the effects of a literacy-based, mentoring program on empowering preadolescent girls in their development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset?”* The format for each week was similar in structure, including whole group instruction, collaborative small group activities, and independent application and practice of the targeted aspect of leadership. Data were collected through pre-assessments and post-

assessments, weekly formative assessments, participant self-reflections, and anecdotal notes.

Data were analyzed using a paired-sample *t*-test with the alpha level set at 0.01. The results show statistical significance for participants in this research study. The results of this study reflect a positive effect on the development of confidence, self-concept and leadership skillset of preadolescent girls through participation in **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***, a five-week literacy-based, mentoring program. Data show that these participants developed an understanding of personal leadership skills and demonstrated application of these aspects within the parameters of the program.

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

This study focuses on empowering preadolescent girls to develop confidence and move from a fixed to growth mindset, take responsibility for their actions, turn failures into learning opportunities, and cultivate a love for self. **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise*** is a literacy-based mentoring program for preadolescent girls designed to improve confidence, positive self-concept, and develop a leadership skillset through five targeted aspects of leadership: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths. Participants will be able to use these empowering skills and tools as they develop into leaders in their schools, home, and community. The development of a leadership skillset will be an effective way to help participants acknowledge and become aware of their own strengths which influence positive self-concept.

The literacy-based curriculum will integrate literature, character analyzation, and collaborative learning activities to determine the impact on preadolescent girls in developing confidence, positive self-concept, and the skillset to empower them to become strong girl leaders. The program will facilitate the opportunity for preadolescent girls to cultivate aspects of leadership. They will be empowered to recognize their full potential and ability to learn, develop a leadership skillset, and demonstrate application of growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths, the targeted aspects of this study.

### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to provide targeted opportunities that will empower preadolescent girls to develop confidence, improve self-concept and become aware of personal leadership skills. The goal of the program, **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***, is to foster and

improve participants' understanding of growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths with the outcome of demonstrated application of this skillset in their school, home, and community. Mentoring, empowering, and investing in the next generation of leaders will enable them to gain confidence and use their skills and tools for the generation after them.

Adolescence is a time when ten to fifteen-year-olds are discovering who they are and shaping their identities. Literacy has proven to have the potential to facilitate identity development more than other academic disciplines (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2003). Therefore, this study uses a literacy-based curriculum to examine the effects of using literacy to empower preadolescent girls to become confident leaders through identification with strong female characters and their responses to life challenges within the chosen literature.

## **Background**

Research shows that girls experience a greater decline in self-esteem than boys during adolescence (American Psychological Association, 1999). Adolescence is a time when ten to fifteen-year-olds are discovering who they are and shaping their identity. Girls decline in their self-confidence during adolescence due to fear of failure, self-image, pressure of perfectionism, and comparison to peers. Factors that limit the confidence of girls in leadership roles emerge during the preadolescent years (Carter, Deyton, Grossman, Hammer, & Shapiro, 2015), which can be a barrier in the development of leadership skills. During this critical period of identity development, girls may benefit most from the empowerment to lead (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008).

In a study on adolescent girls and leadership, Nicole Archard (2012) found that one of the most impactful influences on adolescent girls' level of confidence as a leader was self-concept. An important part of girls' social and cognitive development is how they will respond to failure, which is also linked to their self-concept (Archard, 2012). Dr. Cristal Glangchai, founder of

VentureLab, a nonprofit organization that works to help the next generation become innovators and changemakers through development of an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset, states in her book *VentureGirls* (2018), that young girls are influenced by negative feedback and fear of failure more than young boys. Girls are often taught that the absence of failure, or perfectionism, equals success. This fixed mindset view is found more often during the adolescent years in young girls than it is in boys. Teaching girls to have an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset enables them to persevere through failures and setbacks, pursue their goals, turn their visions into reality, and develop confidence (Glangchai, 2018a). Glangchai notes that an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset is not just about starting companies and businesses. Rather, it is a way of thinking, the ability to be confident and creative, having a vision and making it become a reality (VentureLab, 2017b). The American Psychological Association (APA) claims that instead of focusing on the “storm and stress” of adolescence, there is a need to affirm adolescent girls’ strengths and resilience (American Psychological Association, 1999).

Literacy is a powerful tool, and reading is one of, if not the, most important fundamental skill an individual must have to succeed in life. The Harvard Educational Review claims that “if knowledge is power, then literacy is the key to the kingdom,” and “literacy is a cornerstone to our freedom” (Ippolito, Samson, & Steele, 2008, p. 1). The middle grades also serve as a crucial turning point in adolescents’ lives as readers (Brinda, 2011). The National Middle School Association (NMSA) in 2001 reported that while U.S. readers get off to a fast start, they begin to decline during the early adolescent years. This may be because of the transition from learning to read to the process of reading to learn, which makes adolescent literacy instruction more challenging (Ippolito, Samson, & Steele, 2008). Preadolescents may use reading as a way to answer questions about themselves, their identity, and the world (National Middle School

Association, 2001). Literacy can support preadolescents' understanding and interaction with the world around them and development of social and emotional skills needed to communicate and collaborate with others. Engagement with text that is meaningful to the reader can invoke emotional connections and responses. Characters that the reader can identify and empathize with can be positive ways to cultivate social identity and self-expression (Cummings, Finch, & McLaughlin, 2018). Literacy curriculum provides the greatest opportunity for adolescents to explore identities and respond to the difficulties in their lives and those around them (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2003). In today's school climate, reading is often taught to ensure student success on standardized tests. However, it is important for preadolescents to have the motivation to read for enjoyment and purposes other than academic achievement.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined in order to facilitate understanding within this study and an awareness for the importance of cultivating confidence, self-concept, and a leadership skillset of preadolescent girls through the program, **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***. It will be important for the reader to understand the difference between self-concept, self-identity, self-confidence, and self-esteem. While these terms are related and often used interchangeably, they have differences which should be defined for purposes of this study. This study focuses on how positive self-concept and confidence are necessary for the development of strong leadership skills. The reader should also understand the importance the five targeted aspects of leadership for preadolescent girls that are referenced in this study: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty for self, and personal strengths.

*Self-constructs:*

1. Self-identity is “an understanding of who we are – our attributes, the way we see ourselves in relation to others, our perceived talents, and the awareness of our shortcomings” (Fisher, Frey, & Smith, 2019). Self-identity is socially constructed.
2. Self-esteem is defined as a person’s sense of his or her worth or value (Ackerman, 2018).

*Areas monitored within this study:*

3. Self-Confidence, as defined by Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary (n.d.), is “confidence in oneself and in one’s powers and abilities”.
4. Self-Concept “refers to a student’s perceptions of competence or adequacy in academic and nonacademic domains and is best represented by a profile of self-perceptions across domains” (Manning, 2007, p.11).
5. Leadership skillset is the collection of skills and abilities that can be applied to a leader’s professional or creative endeavors, as defined by Merriam Webster’s online dictionary (n.d.).

*Aspects of leadership focused on within the study:*

6. Growth Mindset is the belief that your basic qualities can be cultivated and developed through your efforts, strategies, help from others, and a passion for stretching yourself (Dweck, 2006). It is the opposite of a fixed mindset, which is the belief that one’s qualities are carved in stone, and that one only has a “certain amount of intelligence, a certain personality, and a certain moral character” (Dweck, 2006, p. 6).
7. Integrity is a character trait associated with being honest, respecting societal norms, and acting in ways consistent with the values, beliefs, and moral principles one claims to

hold. There are five core values associate with integrity: responsibility, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and honesty (Price-Mitchell, 2015).

8. Resilience is defined as “any behavioral, attributional, or emotional response to an academic or social challenge that is positive and beneficial for development” (Dweck & Yeager, 2012, p. 303).
9. Love (and Loyalty) for the purpose of this study, will be defined as the term for self-love. Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary (n.d.) defines self-love as the regard for one’s own happiness and well-being. Loyalty is viewed as remaining faithful and true to one’s self, values, and beliefs.
10. Personal Strengths: skills, tools, and talents that vary among individuals, which are not permanently fixed but can be developed through leadership training and practice (International Institute for Management Development, n.d.).

Other key terms within this study:

11. Young Adolescent is defined by the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) as an individual between the ages of ten and fifteen years old (Association for Middle Level Education, 2010, p. 1). This program will target preadolescents categorized as middle school aged girls in fifth and sixth grade, typically 10-13 years old. For the purposes of this study, young adolescents will be referred to as “*preadolescents*” within this report.
12. Kappa Kappa Gamma is an organization of women, which seeks for every member throughout her life bonds of friendship, mutual support, opportunities for self-growth, respect for intellectual development, and an understanding of and an allegiance to positive ethical principles” (Kappa Kappa Gamma, n.d.). Gamma Nu is the chapter of Kappa Kappa Gamma at the University of Arkansas.

13. Empowerment is “a process of ongoing change through which women and girls expand their aspirations, strengthen their voice, and exercise more choice.” It allows women and girls to “have more control over their lives and futures” (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2017, p. 4)

### **Significance of Study**

**GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise*** is a program offered in a different context than a traditional school setting and school day. This after school program will allow participants the opportunity to speak more freely and openly about what it means to be a strong, confident girl leader. The effects of this literacy-based mentoring program on developing preadolescent girls' confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset will be measured. Participants will be able to examine the role of prominent female characters in the chosen literature that will be used as part of the program curriculum. Each week, participants will analyze characters and how they overcame obstacles and developed into leaders. The literacy-based curriculum will hopefully motivate preadolescent girl participants to read and associate with personality traits of characters from the stories and improve confidence, self-concept, and develop as leaders. The curriculum designed for this study seeks to empower preadolescent girls to develop the aspects of leadership, move from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset and turn failures into learning opportunities, and create an awareness of integrity and responsibility for one's actions. Preadolescent girls will be empowered to become resilient in the face of adversity, value one's self through self-love, stay true to who they are in aligning with their goals and values, and discover their personal strengths and how to effectively use them.

### Primary Research Questions

The primary research question addressed is, “What are the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls’ development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset?” Each week of the program, an aspect of leadership will be addressed as a theme through a letter in the word, “GIRLS”. Weekly questions will be posed in the literacy-based curriculum lessons and investigated in small group mentoring discussions.

- **G (*Growth Mindset*)**: In Week One, participants will develop an understanding of what it means to develop a growth mindset by realizing that their brains have the ability to grow and change. Goal setting plays an important role in moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset. A growth mindset is an aspect of being a leader and can increase participants’ level of self-confidence and fearlessness, allowing them to imagine and work toward future goals through setting goals and creating action plans.
  - Question 1: Will understanding that the brain is malleable and can grow and change by moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset increase confidence, self-concept, and leadership potential?
  - Question 2: What are the effects of this program on preadolescent girls’ confidence in their abilities to set and achieve goals for themselves?
- **I (*Integrity*)**: In Week Two, the letter “I”, will introduce the word integrity, which includes taking responsibility for your own actions along with being respectful and kind to others. The curriculum for Week Two will align with character education and focus on why it is important for leaders to have good character, specifically integrity.
  - Question: Will the program, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**, improve preadolescent girls’ understanding of the importance of taking responsibility for their own



actions, being respectful of others, and acting in ways consistent with their values?

- **R (Resilience):** The topic of resilience will be examined for the letter “R” during Week Three. Participants will learn how to view obstacles and adversity as an opportunity for growth while maintaining a positive mindset. This aspect of leadership will focus on viewing failures, obstacles, and challenges as learning opportunities. As a part of “grit”, resilience teaches girls that success is not equated with perfectionism, or the absence of failure. Rather, it teaches them that it is okay to fail and to persevere through failures.
  - Question: Will teaching preadolescent girls about resilience increase their confidence and self-concept to make good choices when facing challenges?
- **L (Love and Loyalty):** “L”, the fourth letter in “GIRLS”, will be the lesson for Week Four which explores the idea of loving yourself and being loyal to personal values and goals. The participants will discover that strong leaders must take care of themselves first and be loyal, or stay true, to their personal values and goals in order to demonstrate leadership. During Week Four, participants will revisit the goals and values introduced during Weeks One and Week Two to help them discover what it means to stay true to those values and goals. Participants will also develop strategies to help them practice and display their goals and values in their everyday lives.
  - Question: Will **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise** encourage preadolescent girls to appreciate and love who they are, take care of themselves, and stay loyal and true to their personal goals and values?
- **S (Strengths):** The final week of **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise** will focus on the leadership aspect of personal strengths for the letter “S.” Every participant has different

personal strengths and will develop a self-awareness of the strengths needed to be an effective leader. They will recognize that no one leader is strong in every skill. The participants will discover and appreciate their own strengths, be empowered to effectively exercise their strengths, and appreciate the strengths of others.

- Question: What are the effects of **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise** on preadolescent girls' perceptions of their own personal strengths and how these strengths can be developed through the lens of a leadership skillset?

## Summary

***GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise*** is designed as a five-week literacy-based mentoring program. Each week, the lesson and learning activities focus on an aspect of leadership, a theme guided by each letter of the word GIRLS: (G)rowth Mindset, (I)ntegrity, (R)esilience, (L)ove and Loyalty, and (S)trengths. The curriculum uses literature that depicts female characters with a strong leadership skillset. The idea for this project was inspired by the GIRLS Academy program from the Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity. However, the goal for this literacy-based mentoring program focuses on the need to empower preadolescent girls to develop confidence, positive self-concept, and a skillset to be a strong, effective girl leader.

The participants will develop an awareness that effective leaders do not have to be the ones “in charge” or exalted above others. Effective leadership is not necessarily defined by wealth, power, prestige, or entitlement. Instead, leaders have confidence, a positive self-concept, and a leadership skillset that is cultivated through the aspects of a growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love for self and a loyalty to personal beliefs and values, as well as personal strengths. Participants will be engaged in weekly learning activities that will help them develop a

perspective of effective leaders as those who have a passion to learn, work well with others, and have a self-awareness of the personality traits and aspects of effective leadership.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a description of relevant literature and research relating to preadolescent girls' development and various aspects of leadership. Development of adolescents in multiple domains is reviewed first, followed by the challenges participants of this study may face within these domains that could affect their development of leadership skills. The researcher then provides a rationale of the study which includes research from national organizations prominent in examining adolescent development. The five leadership aspects of this study are then explored with current, leading studies. The chapter concludes with a focus on the effects of mentoring relationships in alignment with preadolescent girls' development that is supported by research from significant national organizations.

#### **Developmental Milestones of Preadolescents**

Adolescence is a time of change and development in nearly every area and domain of life for boys and girls, physical, cognitive, moral, psychological, social-emotional, and even spiritual. The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) defines young adolescents as students ages 10 to 15 (Association for Middle Level Education, 2010). This literacy-based mentoring project focuses on girls in fifth and sixth grade who are between the ages of 10 to 13 years old in a middle school setting. In the book, *Early Adolescence: Understanding the 10 to 15 Year Old*, Gail Caissy (2002) states that "at no time in human development do people experience such widespread change, development, and growth" (p. 10). While most adolescents experience changes in these areas, there is great variability as to when and how these developmental changes will occur for the individual. Factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, family, disabilities, and

community can affect the development of an adolescent. The environment of a preadolescent greatly influences their developmental path (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). Caissy illustrates this idea by describing that two girls or two boys can be exactly the same age chronologically, but be in completely different stages developmentally (Caissy, 2002, p. 10). *This We Believe* (2010) and *Promoting Harmony* (2009), publications from the Association for Middle Level Education, both provide examples of developmental characteristics for preadolescents which inform educators and parents about the relationship between the challenges and issues of adolescent development.

**Physical.** Cognitive, moral, and social-emotional developmental changes in adolescents can all be traced back to physical and biological changes (Caissy, 2002). The process of puberty usually begins between the ages of 10 and 14 for most preadolescents (Caissy, 2002). Girls tend to begin puberty one to two years before boys (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). The release of hormones during puberty can affect a preadolescent's rate of growth and cause chemical imbalances which lead to unstable emotions (Caissy, 2002). Chip Wood (2007) discusses the typical developmental characteristics of children ages four to fourteen in his book *Yardsticks*. A common theme noted in his book on preadolescents' physical development is the high level of energy and need for food and snacks throughout the day. Due to an increase in energy, preadolescents need daily physical activity to release some of their energy (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). They may begin to adopt unhealthy habits and risky behaviors during this time because they are physically vulnerable (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). In addition, they are becoming more aware of the changing differences in their bodies in comparison to others, which inevitably impacts levels of confidence.

**Cognitive and intellectual.** Many preadolescents are in an intellectual state of transition. This is the stage when they progress from thinking concretely, organizing information based on things that are visible and tangible, to thinking more abstractly (Wood, 2007). Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development outlines four stages in which children progress in the journey of birth to adolescence. His theory proves preadolescents are transitioning to the formal operations stage during the ages of eleven or twelve. Acquisitions associated with this stage include the ability to reason about abstract, hypothetical, and contrary-to-fact ideas. Piaget also reasoned that during this stage of cognitive development, adolescents appear to have more advanced scientific reasoning and mathematical problem-solving skills (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2016). They become curious and inquire about themselves and the world around them. It is important that preadolescents are able to connect what they are learning to real-life situations (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010).

**Moral.** Preadolescents are in the stage of developing their own personal values and becoming aware of the inconsistencies of morality in society (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). As they are transitioning from self-centered moral reasoning to principle-oriented reasoning, they begin to take others' feelings into consideration and have compassion for others (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). Due to their ability to think more abstractly, preadolescents also develop the ability to see the world from various perspectives and understand ideas such as "justice" (Wood, 2007). They imagine endless possibilities and the best outcome for circumstances. This age range also includes connection to Lawrence Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development, which explains how children develop moral reasoning skills. His theory supports that an individual progresses through three levels of moral reasoning that are comprised of six stages throughout their lifetime. Preadolescents between the ages of 10 and 13

years old typically move from the earliest level of moral reasoning, preconventional morality, to the highest level, conventional morality (Veritas, 2017). During this stage, preadolescents may determine what is right and wrong based on what will please others. Adolescents want to maintain positive relationships by being loyal and considering the perspectives and beliefs of others (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2016).

**Social-emotional.** Social-emotional changes during preadolescent development brings about increased vulnerability. Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development suggests that individuals navigate through eight psychosocial stages from birth to old age (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2016). Adolescence is characterized by the stage of industry versus inferiority and the identity versus role confusion stage. As preadolescents are taking on increased responsibility, they begin to compare their abilities to their peers and engage in a period of identity development (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2016). As they are trying to develop their own ideals, values, and beliefs, media and pop culture can negatively influence their own identity development, which leads to a compromise of beliefs (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). Their ability to regulate emotions often lags behind their physical and cognitive maturity. Preadolescents increasingly seek approval and acceptance from their peers (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). Due to hormonal changes, they often experience mood swings, which bring about emotional dissonance and consideration of meeting the basic needs of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010). In this stage of development, preadolescents often welcome positive relationships with adults outside of their family and benefit from these relationships due to encouragement, support, and the nurturing of their interests and curiosities. Strong, positive relationships help adolescents develop trust, empathy, compassion, and a sense of right and wrong (*Association for Middle Level Education*, 2010).

## Challenges of Participants

This section identifies challenges that preadolescent girls may face in the cognitive, social-emotional, and neuroscience domains. Adolescents face many other challenges, depending on biological and/or environmental factors; however, the challenges described in this section are specific to this study.

**Cognitive connections.** Preadolescent girls experience several challenges in the cognitive domain. The challenges may relate to literacy skills, confidence, and self-concept.

**Literacy skills.** The middle grades also serve as a crucial turning point in adolescents' lives as readers (Brinda, 2011). Several studies report that while U.S. readers get off to a fast start, they begin to decline during the early adolescent years (National Middle School Association, 2001). This may be because of the transition from learning to read to reading to learn, which makes adolescent literacy instruction more challenging (Ippolito, 2008). Preadolescents may use reading as a way to answer questions about themselves, their identity, and the world around them (National Middle School Association, 2001). More than other academic disciplines, literacy has the potential to facilitate identity development (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2003). Literacy is a powerful tool that preadolescents can use to understand and interact with the world around them and develop social and emotional skills needed to communicate and collaborate with others (Cummings, 2008). Communication and collaboration are two of the "4 C" skills needed for 21<sup>st</sup> Century success. Reading creates a state of 'flow' producing positive emotional states by providing characters that readers can identify and empathize with and look to as role models. The more relevant and relatable the context of the material, the more likely preadolescents are to engage in the learning process. Engaging activities will allow for self-expression and social identity to be cultivated (Cummings, 2018). A



literacy-rich curriculum provides the greatest opportunity for adolescents to explore identities and respond to the challenges in their lives and those around them (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2003). It is important that preadolescents be motivated to pick up books and read for purposes other than academic achievement. The Harvard Educational Review claims that “if knowledge is power, then literacy is the key to the kingdom,” and “literacy is a cornerstone to our freedom” (Ippolito, 2008). It is also important for adolescents to implement the strategy of transfer of learning. The International Reading Association outlines the importance of this strategy in their position statement on adolescent literacy by stating that adolescents need to “be able to make connections to their lives, other texts, and to their expanding worlds” (International Reading Association, 2012, p. 5).

***Confidence.*** In comparison to preadolescent boys, girls are more likely to suffer from a lack of confidence (Archard, 2012). In her study on adolescent girls and leadership, Archard found that adolescent girls view confidence as an important prerequisite to leadership but lack confidence in their leadership ability. They often compare themselves to others and doubt their skills and ability. Factors that limit the confidence of girls in leadership roles emerge during the preadolescent years (Carter 2015), which include fear of failure, self-image, pressures of perfectionism, and comparison to peers. However, single-sex environments are found to have a positive impact on the level of confidence in preadolescent girls (Archard, 2012; Carter, 2015). Glanchai addresses the confidence issue in young girls through her company VentureLab. She asserts that exposing girls to an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset allows them to learn from failure, become more aware of opportunities around them and gain confidence (VentureLab, 2017). In addition, a report from Girl Scouts promotes that leadership is a matter of fostering girls’ self-confidence (Girl Scouts, 2008). A lack of self-confidence in their skills and

competencies, or self-perception, is the single greatest barrier to leadership in girls (Girl Scouts, 2008).

***Self-concept.*** Self-concept “refers to a student’s perceptions of competence or adequacy in academic and nonacademic domains and is best represented by a profile of self-perceptions across domains” (Manning, 2007, p.11). Preadolescents also experience considerable changes in self-concept, in response to changes in their physical and intellectual development (L’Esperance, Strahan, & Van Hoose, 2009). Preadolescents are thinking about who they are in functional ways for the first time. In early adolescence, students have an “either/or” view of themselves. They view themselves as either able or unable, responsible or irresponsible, valuable or not at all. During this stage, self-concept is a “global” construct. However, as they mature, preadolescents begin to view their strengths and weaknesses in specific dimensions (L’Esperance, Strahan, & Van Hoose, 2009). Adolescents are in the identity versus role confusion state of Erikson’s stages model of identity development. In this stage, adolescents are developing their identity in social, biological, and cultural areas (L’Esperance, Strahan, & Van Hoose, 2009). Self-identity is socially constructed, and therefore not a fixed construct. Adolescents need to have a positive self-concept before developing a positive self-identity. If one’s awareness of self is not positive, their identity may be more susceptible to negative social influences.

**Social-emotional learning.** Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the ability to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, empathize with others, create positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, n.d.). SEL competencies provide many academic and developmental benefits and encompass tools that students need for success at school and in the workforce. It provides students with the necessary knowledge and resources to ensure high-quality learning and positive interactions with others. School-based programs such

as Responsive Classroom, Positive Action, Student Success Skills, and Reading Apprenticeship are implementing social and emotional learning into educational settings in order to promote these skills for K-12 students.

***Competencies.*** The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) promotes the advancement and implementation of social and emotional learning (SEL) in the classroom. CASEL provides many research-based resources for teachers and educators and has developed a framework for integrating systemic social and emotional learning practice into the school curriculum. The framework identifies five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

*Self-awareness.* Self-awareness is the ability to identify emotions and thoughts and how they affect one's behavior. It also includes the ability to recognize personal strengths and use a growth mindset. It includes identifying emotions, accurate self-perception, recognizing strengths, self-confidence, and self-efficacy (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2017).

*Self-management.* Self-management is the ability to regulate emotions and thoughts, manage stress, and set and achieve personal goals. The components of self-management include impulse control, stress management, self-discipline, self-motivation, goal setting, and organizational skills (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2017).

*Social awareness.* Social awareness incorporates viewing situations from another's perspective and having empathy, which is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. It also includes appreciating and respecting others. Social awareness focuses on perspective taking, empathy, appreciating diversity, and respect for others (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2017).

*Relationship skills.* The ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships, communicate well, and work as a team is defined by relationship skills. Communication, social engagement, relationship building, and teamwork are components of relationship skills (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2017).

*Responsible decision-making.* Responsible decision-making is the ability to make choices regarding personal and social interactions, evaluate consequence of behavior and actions, and consider the well-being of oneself and others. It includes identifying problems, analyzing situations, solving problems, evaluating, reflecting, and ethical responsibility (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2017).

*Lack of awareness.* Social and emotional learning (SEL) is not only a crucial component to student success in school, but in work and life as well. “The Missing Piece,” a survey of teachers across America on how social and emotional learning (SEL) programs can empower children and transform schools, reports that the lack of urgency to implement SEL in schools around America threatens the future success of students (Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Associates, 2016). The absence of such programs and curriculum inhibits our students from recognizing, or being self-aware, of their full potential as responsible, caring, knowledgeable, and contributing individuals to their community and society (Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Associates, 2016). A study by Eklund, Haider, Kilgus, and Kilpatrick (2018) reports that most states in the United States do not have freestanding K-12 social and emotional learning standards. Gaps within the social and emotional learning literature make it difficult for schools to practically implement the SEL standards and curriculum.

*Social skills.* Adolescence invites significant turmoil in the social and emotional realms of a student’s life. Preadolescents, especially girls, are infatuated with appearance and how they

are perceived by others. They desire positive relationships and approval from peers. As a way to regulate emotions, they may experience mood swings or display immature behavior (Association for Middle Level Education, 2010). The need to understand how to regulate emotions and develop social skills while interacting with others is especially important for preadolescents. In early childhood, they learn to connect words with emotions as they interact with people. Entering into adolescence, they begin to see that the reactions and expressions people have are not always reflective of their true feelings (L'Esperance, Strahan, & Van Hoose, 2009). Preadolescents are able to regulate their emotions and develop coping strategies as they connect thoughts and feelings. Coping strategies gives them greater control over their responses (L'Esperance, Strahan, & Van Hoose, 2009). Students who participate in SEL programs are found to have better social skills (Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Associates, 2016).

**Motivation.** One of the universal causes of demotivation that Eric Jensen outlines in the book *Teaching with the Brain in Mind* (2005) is the lack of positive relationships. “The Missing Piece” reports that students who receive instruction through SEL programs are more motivated to learn. This benefit is not only applicable in the school setting but also in the interpersonal challenges that preadolescents are facing (Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Associates, 2016). Most effective educators focus on innovative ways to motivate and engage the brains of their adolescent students. The issue of motivation and engagement can be viewed rather as an issue of state management. “States” refer to the external behaviors exhibited by students. External behaviors are correlated with the brain’s internal processes forming complex signaling systems that produce states. Emotional, cognitive, and physical interactions are combined by states allowing one to make all of their decisions (Jensen, 2005). The ultimate goal for educators is to develop intrinsic motivation to learn in adolescents. Jensen (2005) writes that the performance

of many learners will drop as they continuously receive initial rewards for their actions. As previously mentioned, adolescents are in a time of identity development, and no two students are alike. Therefore, a reward for one student may not motivate another. Our brain changes in response to the environment, and therefore the rewards that might have worked initially, may not work in future situations.

**Neuroscience/ brain development.** Preadolescents' brains are not yet mature, especially in the prefrontal cortex, or the decision making and emotional control area of the brain (L'Esperance, Strahan, & Van Hoose, 2009). Middle level students are in a critical time for brain growth. An important concept to understand in regard to the development of the brain is neuroplasticity. Neuroplasticity means that the brain is malleable, and it can change and grow. The brain is shaped by both its genetic code and the environment. The brain is primed for learning during a state of "developmental grace" between the ages of 6 and 12 (Wolfe, 2010). This stage of development allows preadolescents to gain skills and competencies more easily than in adulthood. While the brain is primed for learning during the middle years, it does not grow without stimulation. It is especially important to provide preadolescents with many opportunities and experiences that foster their mental, physical, social, and emotional development. During adolescence the frontal lobes undergo another stage of growth and development followed by pruning – getting rid of excess, unused connections and keeping the most useful synapses (Wolfe, 2010). Brain growth accelerates the "powers of the mind" (L'Esperance, Strahan, & Van Hoose, 2009, p. 19). Exposure to stress has different effects on the male and female brain (Horch & Wilson, 2002). The stress that preadolescent girls experience during puberty may inhibit and have negative effects on the learning process, which in turn, may negatively impact their self-concept and motivation (Horch & Wilson, 2002).

**Rationale for Study**

This section provides a rationale for the study supported by five prominent organizations that align with adolescent development. The organizations include the Alliance for Excellent Education, the American Psychological Association, the Association for Middle Level Education, the International Reading Association, and the National Education Association.

**Alliance for excellent education.** While the Alliance for Excellent Education (All4Ed) is an organization committed to improving educational outcomes of high school students and providing opportunity for postsecondary learning, it also includes research on adolescent development. All4Ed calls for the U.S. education system to align with the science of adolescent learning (SAL). Because preadolescents are the nation's future leaders, innovators, workers, and consumers, educators can no longer afford to ignore the growing body of scientific research for addressing adolescent developmental and learning needs (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2018). This knowledge allows educators to identify students' strengths and needs, which in turn provides the opportunity to develop interventions that will support students' academic, social, and emotional development (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2018).

**American psychological association.** The American Psychological Association (APA) recognizes that a new focus and understanding of adolescent girls still needs to be developed. While it is important that the risks and stresses that adolescent girls face in their everyday lives must be understood and addressed, there must also be a focus on how to assist preadolescent girls to develop their strengths and resilience to guide them through this challenging time in their lives. Preadolescent girls are more anxious and stressed than boys, and they experience a greater decrease in self-esteem. The APA confirms that adolescence for young girls is a time of transition, a time to explore new things, experience greater freedom, gain independence, and

increase self-awareness. Therefore, it is essential that interventions for preadolescent girls are offered and address such issues to help them navigate the transitional period (American Psychological Association, 1999).

**Association for middle level education.** The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) is the leading organization in helping students ages 10 to 15 advance their education, succeed as learners, and make positive contributions to society (Association for Middle Level Education, 2019). The organization is built on four core values – integrity, future thinking, respect, and collaboration. The AMLE position paper, *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010) outlines a vision for successful schools with 16 research-based characteristics and evidence to lead students to improved achievement and overall development. *This We Believe* states that the middle level years are a transitional and developmental period for students. Middle level education, therefore, is the crucial link in the pre-K-16 continuum. The growth and development that occurs during adolescence considerably affects the future success of these students (Association for Middle Level Education, 2010).

**International reading association.** In 1999, the International Reading Association (IRA) released a position statement, “Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement of the International Reading Association” as a guide to support adolescents’ literacy development. The IRA revised their statement in 2012 to provide the ongoing support adolescents need for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The IRA position statement expresses the need for adolescents to have access to engaging and motivating content and explicit instruction to support their continued development (International Reading Association, 2012). Adolescents need to utilize strategies for comprehension to make connections to their lives, other texts, and to their expanding worlds (International Reading Association, 2012). The IRA makes a strong statement about the



importance of literacy connection to adolescent development. As preadolescents are beginning to form their own identities, literacy is a critical link for students to understand their emerging independence in relation to the world around them. Literacy serves as a tool that adolescents use to develop leadership skills by analyzing the characters in a book as well as to make connections to developing their own identities with the larger communities around them. Using multiple literacies allows adolescents to gain different perspectives on issues and to understand the importance of participating in civic activities. Many adolescents want to make a positive difference in their communities and the world. As they reflect on the positive impact that they can make, students develop leadership skills and a sense of self-efficacy. These adolescent leaders will in turn positively influence their peers to use literary experiences as examples for making a difference in their world (International Reading Association, 2012).

**National education association.** In 2014, the National Education Association (NEA) released a report title *Closing the Leadership Gap: How Educators Can Help Girls Lead*. The goal of the report was to promote awareness about the gender gap in leadership, provide implications for educators to help close the gap, and create pathways and opportunities for girls to step into leadership positions through awareness of gender-based teaching. It showed that women are underrepresented in public leadership (National Education Association, 2014). The middle school years provide important opportunities for all students to experience different leadership positions and identities. A survey of educators from the report suggests that there are observed gender patterns in leadership among middle school students. For example, educators reported that girls are more likely to take on leadership roles in English and Language Arts, while boys are more likely to take on leadership roles in Math and Science (National Education

Association, 2014).

### **Leading Relevant Research**

The following section presents leading research on adolescence and the five aspects of leadership targeted in this study: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths.

**Adolescence.** Adolescence is a time of change and development in nearly every area and domain of life for boys and girls – physical, cognitive, moral, psychological, social-emotional, and even spiritual. In the book, *Early Adolescence: Understanding the 10 to 15 Year Old*, Gail Caissy (2002) describes how early adolescents begin to question their values and develop their own ideas, beliefs, and identities. The constant change and struggle to form an identity leads preadolescents to feel insecure and vulnerable. Therefore, a positive self-concept is difficult to develop during the adolescent period (Caissy, 2002). One common trend in preadolescents is the decline in self-concept as students transition from elementary school to the middle grades. As children transition into adolescence, they become increasingly aware of how others view their skills and abilities and begin to compare themselves to peers (Manning, 2007). Caissy (2002) ties preadolescents' feelings of inferiority to lack of self-confidence, insecurity, low self-esteem, and perceptions of themselves as unintelligent, which is likened to a fixed mindset. As adolescents undergo intellectual change, their perspective changes, and their self-concept, or perception of self, changes dramatically as they reassess who they are (Caissy, 2002). Changes in their thinking ability, or development of a growth mindset, allows preadolescents to work toward the goals they set (Caissy, 2002).

As they form their own identity, it is important that preadolescents have the opportunity to test several different identities as individuals and within the different levels of their

environment. Urie Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development describes that children's development is influenced by the different relationships within their environment (Oswalt, 2008). Bronfenbrenner's model consists of four different systems, or levels of environmental influence. The microsystem is the smallest environment including the immediate relationships one interacts with, while the next level, the mesosystem, consists of the interactions and influences from within the microsystem. The exosystem includes people and places that one may not have a direct relationship with but that still have a large effect on an individual. The macrosystem is the largest environment level in which we interact that has great influence over an individual (Oswalt, 2008). This system consists of cultural and societal beliefs. Bond, Buzwell, Gartland, Olsson, and Sawyer (2011) agree with the influence of the different levels of environmental influence on an individual, and their study examines how there are resilience factors nested within each level.

**Growth mindset.** Carol Dweck defines growth mindset in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (2016) as the belief that your basic qualities can be cultivated and developed through your efforts, strategies, help from others, and a passion for stretching yourself in new ways. One reason adolescents often feel inferior is because they perceive themselves as unintelligent (Caissy, 2002). When girls understand that their brains are malleable, still growing and developing, their self-confidence increases helping them reach their full potential (Glangchai, 2018b). Adolescence is a time when bodies and minds are already changing (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2018), so teaching students to change their mindsets in a positive way can affect how they learn, respond to challenges, and interact with others. Research shows that the practice of goal setting increases students' skills for achieving success, self-efficacy, and intrinsic motivation, which can extend their academic and social success (Midwest

Comprehensive Center, 2018). Achievement of goals, along with increased self-efficacy, encourages adolescents to set new, more challenging goals to work toward which also increases self-awareness through the process of self-reflection (Schunk, 1990).

**Integrity.** Integrity serves as one of the core values of the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) and is seen as the practice of “ethical, inclusive, and courageous behaviors” (Association of Middle Level Education, 2019). Students are exposed to more media outlets than ever before, and therefore, are receiving mixed messages about the value of good character (Brannon, 2008). The basis of social harmony and action is integrity, which has five core values – responsibility, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and honesty (Price-Mitchell, 2015). These values closely align with the six pillars of character designed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics (1992), which are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Heart & Sole (2015), a program created by the nonprofit organization Girls on the Run, seeks to help adolescent girls cultivate empathy and strengthen positive connections or relationships with others. Heart and Sole developed the Girl Wheel for preadolescent girls to think more holistically about themselves and others. Heather Britt (2015) states in her article that as girls become aware of the Wheels of others, they become aware of others’ experiences and needs. This enables them to grow in their positive connections, interactions, and care for others, thus being more willing to stand up for themselves and others. Research completed by Price-Mitchell (2015), found that students who stand up for principles they believe in have high degrees of self-efficacy.

During adolescence, girls lose connection with themselves and authentic connection with others (Jordan, 2006). However, this is also a time when peers take on a more important role than ever before in the lives of preadolescents. Therefore, it is crucial to teach young girls how

to show integrity in order to foster healthy, positive relationships and help them discover their own core values and beliefs. Brannon's (2008) research on conducting interviews with National Board Certified Teachers concluded that when character education, which includes integrity, was integrated into classroom expectations, students' learning and demonstration of positive behaviors improved. Preadolescents were more accepting and respectful of each other and developed a sense of compassion and responsibility for their own actions (Brannon, 2008). In relation to the research on growth mindset, one must understand that mindset changes the way a person can relate to those around them and it tends to become infectious. Practicing ethical, inclusive, and courageous behaviors can positively influence others to show integrity.

**Resilience.** As a part of Angela Duckworth's research on "grit" (2016), resilience teaches girls that it is okay to fail. Failures, obstacles, and challenges are opportunities for learning and growth. Teaching preadolescent girls about resilience is instilling within them the readiness to turn failures and obstacles into fuel for renewed determination (Glangchai, 2018b). Girls who see failures and mistakes as a step in the learning process are able to apply this thinking to other challenges in life, which leads to a new growth mindset and leaves them feeling empowered (Glangchai, 2018b). As previously mentioned, preadolescents are highly concerned about their social competence, and students need to be able to respond resiliently when their social relationships are challenged (Dweck & Yeager, 2012). Resilience is critically important for girls in adolescence because it is during this time of development that girls begin to lack confidence and rates of depression increase (Jordan, 2006). Instead of focusing on the "storm and stress" adolescents often experience during their development, the American Psychological Association claims that we should instead focus on how to develop the strengths and resilience of preadolescent girls (American Psychological Association, 1999).

Archard (2012) shows that how girls cope with failure plays an important part in their social and cognitive development and is often linked to their self-concept. Females rely more on other females as a coping mechanism, meaning that they are more likely to pass on depressive symptoms and the negative impact of failure to their peers (Archard, 2012). This strongly aligns the importance of discussion with preadolescent girls with a focus on resilience, growth mindset, and integrity. It is important for adolescents to have a growth mindset as they face adversity and failures. A growth mindset helps adolescents maintain a positive outlook and view times of challenges as an opportunity for learning. This optimism for positively considering life's challenges can be passed on and influence peers. Teaching students to be resilient and view failures as learning opportunities will create a culture in the classroom where students feel safe to take intellectual risks.

**Love and loyalty.** *The Leader in Me* program, created by Stephen Covey, is utilized in many schools across the United States and around the world. It has incorporated the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* as a program to develop student leaders. The seventh habit makes reference to “Sharpen the Saw”, a euphemism for taking care of oneself (2008). Adolescents are constantly comparing themselves to their peers, which can lead to a decrease in their self-concept and confidence. The American Psychological Association (APA) found that adolescent girls are more anxious and stressed than adolescent boys (1999). Girls suffer from increased depression, lower self-esteem, and greater rates of eating disorders. Young girls experience more body image dissatisfaction and distress over their looks as well as diminished academic achievement during adolescence. Adolescent girls even attempt suicide more frequently (American Psychological Association, 1999). The way one perceives their own physical appearance has the strongest relationship to overall self-esteem (Manning, 2007). It is important that adolescents

learn to value who they are as an individual, develop positive self-care habits, and learn to love themselves by being confident and proud. Cristal Glangchai, author of *VentureGirls* (2018), correlates developing as a leader to being loyal and true to yourself. She claims that it is important to help girls stay true (loyal) to their interests by showing them that there are people doing impactful things in the world who have relatable passions and skill sets (Glangchai, 2018b). Teaching girls to appreciate and value who they are in every realm, mentally, physically, social-emotionally, and spiritually, is essential to their well-being and success. Interventions, such as mentoring programs, that help girls navigate this transitional period and gain self-awareness are essential to this positive development of self (American Psychological Association, 1999). Allen, Diener, and Kansky (2016) found in their study that positive affect, or the emotion or desire influencing behaviors and actions, may lead to positive life outcomes, including stronger social relationships and satisfaction with careers.

**Strengths.** In their article, Hoyt and Kennedy (2008) state that adolescence is undoubtedly a critical period for nurturing women's leadership skills and qualities. This is because leadership is a transformational experience, meaning it is a developmental process and not defined by concrete behaviors and accomplishments. Adolescents are undergoing significant change, and therefore a transformational experience such as leadership is relevant. Their study concluded that as adolescent girls' vision and view of leadership expanded and diversified, through multiple forms of leadership, participants were able to visualize themselves in a definition of leadership which included utilizing their own strengths (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008). When adolescent girls identify and recognize their own strengths, they feel empowered and have the self-awareness to take care of themselves (Britt, 2015). Both studies promote social interventions that lead to the empowerment of adolescent girls to defy normative developmental

trends. When preadolescent girls recognize their strengths and understand how they can be used in their own environment to impact change, they feel empowered and strong. Another study on adolescent girls and leadership by Archard (2012) proves that girls often lack confidence in their leadership ability and underestimate themselves as leaders. They doubted their personal skills and ability often comparing themselves to others. The participants in the study viewed confidence as an important prerequisite to leadership. The two largest influences on the level of confidence for adolescent girls were image and self-concept. A lack of confidence in girls may inhibit them in applying for school leadership positions (Archard, 2012). Single-sex environments are found to provide girls with opportunities for leadership and confidence-building because they focus on particular gender needs (Carter, 2015). The IRA (2012) also states that literacy is a powerful tool for developing leadership skills in adolescents. The opportunity for adolescents to use multiple literacies allows them to understand the importance of participating in civic activities, which therefore develops leadership skills, sense of self-efficacy (International Reading Association, 2012), and empowers them to be change agents in the context of their environments.

### **Interventions**

This section identifies six intervention programs that provide mentoring experiences and address issues and positive, pro-social development of preadolescent girls. The programs include Cool Girls, Girl Scouts, Girls Leadership, Girls on the Run, Strong Girls Read Strong Books, and VentureLab.

**Mentoring programs.** One beneficial way to promote positive and healthy development of adolescent girls is through mentoring. Research has proven that interventions such as strong, growth-fostering, mentoring relationships between adolescent girls and adult women can



promote healthy, psychosocial development and lead to purposeful activity and a healthier sense of self (Liang & Spencer, 2009; Liang, Lund, Mousseau, & Spencer, 2016). The study by Liang and Spencer concludes that healthy development stems from the emotional support that mentoring relationships can provide. These relationships can promote the development of new skills and confidence for adolescent girls. Mentoring relationships provide opportunities for fun and enjoyment by giving the adolescents a break from the challenges they face in the world and the stress of their daily lives (Liang & Spencer, 2009). Because preadolescents are exploring adult roles in this transitional stage of adolescence, the middle school age is an appropriate time for students to participate in mentoring programs with successful college students (Radcliffe & Stephens, 2008).

**Cool girls.** Cool Girls, founded in 1989, is a mentoring program for elementary and middle school-age girls in low-income communities. The program focuses on helping girls make smart choices and break the cycle of risk-taking behaviors associated with low socio-economic status. There are several components to the program such as Girls Club, Cool Scholars, and Cool Sisters. Overall this program teaches a wide range of topics to develop life skill. The Cool Girls program seeks to promote self-esteem, assurance, and cultural awareness while providing guidance for positive transformation (Broomfield-Massey, DiMeo, Kuperminc, & Thomason, J. 2011). Research on this program shows that it has profoundly impacted participants' self-concept, academic success, future orientation, and healthy behaviors (Broomfield-Massey, DiMeo, Kuperminc, & Thomason, J. 2011).

**Girl scouts.** Girl Scouts is a leadership organization for girls established in 1912. In 2008, the organization released "Change It Up! What Girls Say About Redefining Leadership," a report on how boys and girls define leadership, challenges related to leadership, and the effect of

gender stereotypes in leadership. According to this study, promoting leadership in girls is a matter of fostering their self-confidence (Girl Scouts, 2008). In fact, the study claims that self-perception, or lack of confidence in skills and competencies, is the single greatest obstacle to leadership for girls. Girls experience deeper fears and self-consciousness about social acceptance than boys. When asked what kind of leaders they want to be, girls responded that they want to be someone who stands up for their beliefs and values (Girl Scouts, 2008). Girls desire a purpose-driven model of leadership oriented toward social change and relationships, rather than the “command and control” style that is often observed in our male-driven leadership culture (Girl Scouts, 2008). Environments that provide organized, informal activities and exposure to the leadership opportunities that girls are seeking in this society are scarce (Girl Scouts, 2008).

***Girls leadership.*** Girls Leadership is an organization that equips girls with the skills and courage they need to find and raise their voices (Shwartz, 2018). Some of the goals for this organization include learning activities that teach young girls how to engage in productive conflict, learn and grow from their mistakes, develop emotional intelligence, and take responsibility for their actions (Shwartz, 2018). Social and emotional learning serves as the foundation for the organization’s leadership development. Teaching preadolescent girls how to regulate their emotions and deal with conflict is essential in the age of technology when the voice of media often suppresses the voices of young girls.

***Girls on the run.*** A program that has had positive effects on adolescent development is Girls on the Run (GOTR). The curriculum for this program addresses many societal and developmental challenges of preadolescent girls, such as peer pressure, risk-taking behaviors, concern about body image, and gender stereotypes. Girls on the Run seeks to help girls discover

their potential and gain confidence while developing an appreciation for fitness and a healthy lifestyle (Galeotti, 2015). Research has proven that programs similar to GOTR provide opportunities for preadolescent girls to develop strengths and skills, a part of identity development that helps them feel more confident, healthy, and empowered as girl leaders (Galeotti, 2015).

***Strong girls read strong books.*** Strong Girls Read Strong Books (2016) is a program developed by two professors from the University of Iowa College of Education. Amanda Thein and Renita Schmidt developed the research project and afterschool reading program to bring fourth- through sixth-grade girls together to read about and discuss books with positive female protagonists (Conlow, n.d.). Reflecting on the program, Schmidt says, “Strong Girls is about reading, but it’s also about growing up whole, becoming the best you can be, and trying to introduce girls to all different kinds of women” (Conlow, n.d.). Strong Girls creates a safe environment that allows girls to talk about what it means to be a strong and empowered girl. Participants are able to analyze the impact that literature can have on perspectives of ourselves and others (Conlow, n.d.). The results of the program show an increase in readership and positive changes in academics, identity, and self-esteem. Schmidt and Thein found that when girls read and analyze the interactions of characters with other women characters, they “capture the feeling of a character’s strong sense of self and staying true to that self” (Schmidt & Thein, 2016, p. 10).

***Venturelab.*** Dr. Cristal Glangchai founded VentureLab in 2013, a nonprofit organization to help the next generation become innovators and changemakers through the development and self-awareness of an entrepreneurial mind and skillset. While believing that all kids need an entrepreneurial mindset in order to be successful, the program is designed specifically for girls

(Glangchai, 2018a). Glangchai and her team recognized that girls are being discouraged from leadership roles in many fields, such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education (STEM). With an entrepreneurial mind and skillset, girls become aware of the opportunities that surround them, become more confident, and develop resiliency. VentureLab presents the idea that entrepreneurship is not just about starting a company, but it is about turning visions into reality. It is a way of thinking, a mindset that includes curiosity, courage, resilience, optimism, creativity, and initiative (VentureLab, 2017, p. 3).

### **Summary**

This review of relevant literature summarized developmental milestones for adolescents and identified the challenges and issues of adolescents, specifically preadolescent girls in today's society that align with physical, cognitive/intellectual, moral, social-emotional, and neurological brain development. The review identified the challenges of preadolescent girls pertaining to the domains of development and the neuroscience of the brain and explored current, leading studies that relate to the five aspects of leadership targeted in this study. A summary of major organizations that provide research on adolescent development was included, along with interventions of various mentoring programs that address issues and positive, pro-social development of preadolescent girls.

## Chapter III

### Methodology

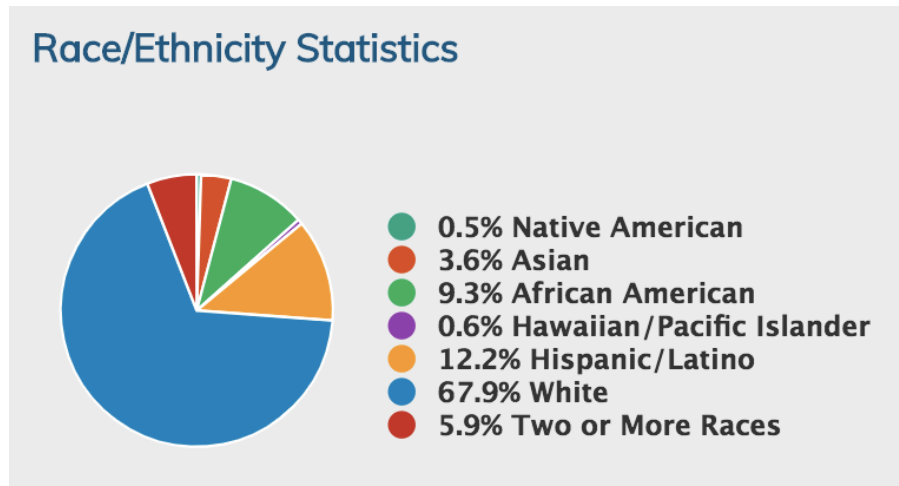
#### Introduction

The study investigated the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls' development of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset. It was intended that the study would benefit preadolescent participants in a middle level setting through the literacy-based mentoring program, **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***. The study was designed to monitor the areas of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset by targeting the aspects of growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty to self, and awareness of personal strengths to empower preadolescent girls in their development of leadership skills. This chapter describes the setting of the study, the participants, and the intervention. A mixed methods design was used for collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. The methods for collecting and analyzing data, assessment procedures, and intervention strategies will be described.

#### Description of District and School Demographics

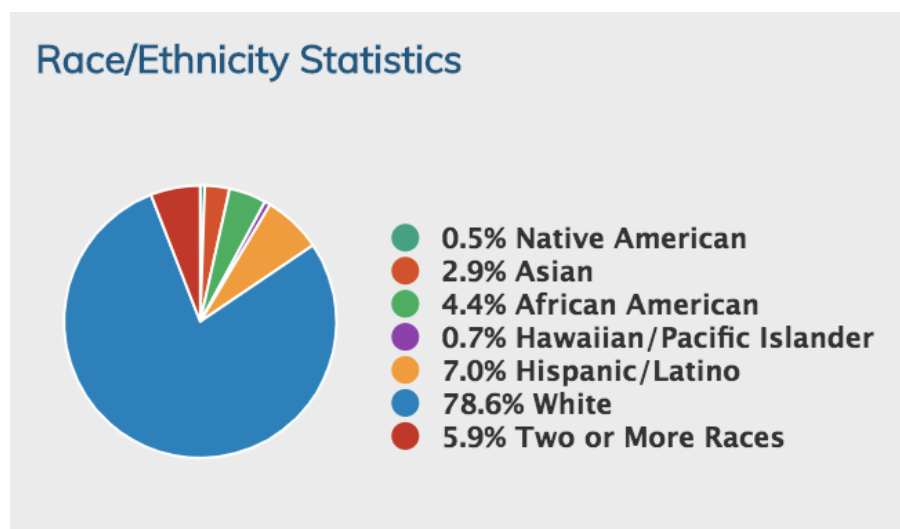
**District.** The study took place at a middle school in a public-school district in Northwest Arkansas. The school district is comprised of 16 schools that serve 10,017 students from Kindergarten through twelfth grade. Approximately 38% of the students in the school district meet the federal guidelines of poverty, 8% are English Learners, and 13% are eligible to receive special education. The district has a diverse student population consisting of 67.9% White students, 12.2% Hispanic/Latino, 9.3% Black/African American, 5.9% two or more races, 3.6% Asian, , 0.6% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 0.5% Native American. Figure 1 illustrates the racial demographics for the school district in which the intervention was conducted.

Demographic information in this section was retrieved from the 2017-2018 District Report Card (Arkansas Department of Education, 2019a).



*Figure 1.* Racial demographics of the public-school district where the intervention was implemented.

**School.** The middle school where the study took place serves a total of 747 students. Of the total number of students in the school, 22% of students meet the federal guidelines of poverty, 3% are English Learners, and 13% are eligible to receive special education. Racial demographics for the middle school include 78.6% White students, 7.0% Hispanic/Latino, 5.9% two or more races, 4.4% Black/African American, 2.9% Asian, 0.7% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 0.5% Native American. This data is based on the 2017-2018 School Report Card (Arkansas Department of Education, 2019b). Figure 2 illustrates the racial demographics for the middle school in which the intervention was conducted.



*Figure 2.* Racial demographics of the middle school where the intervention was implemented.

### **Intervention Setting and Participants**

**Intervention setting.** The study took place in a middle school setting in Northwest Arkansas where the participants were enrolled. The intervention was a five-week program, and each meeting was held on Tuesdays after school from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. Participants met in a large group setting to begin the meeting and later transitioned to small group breakout sessions.

**Participants in study.** This study was conducted twice during the 2018-2019 academic calendar year. During the 2018 fall semester, 29 sixth-grade female students participated in the program, and 39 fifth-grade female students participated during the 2019 spring semester.

### **Confidentiality**

The researcher sought and was granted permission by the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this study (See Appendix A) along with approval from the administration of the school where the study was conducted (See Appendix B). Permission to participate in the program was obtained prior to the commencement of the study. An application was sent home with all female students in the sixth-grade during the fall semester,

which included a letter to parents, an Informed Consent Form, and a Participant Information Sheet (See Appendix C). The students who returned the application were selected as participants for the program. A signature from both the parent or guardian and the participant were required before data for that participant were recorded. The Informed Consent described the purpose and procedures of the study and provided the risks and benefits of the program. It also explained that the program was completely voluntary and that the parent or guardian may withdraw their consent at any time during the duration of the program without any penalty. The same procedure was used for the fifth-grade participants in the spring semester.

All information was kept confidential by the researcher according to Federal and State law and University policy. Confidentiality was assured and maintained by the researcher through the establishment of a code. All data was recorded and reported anonymously using the code, and only the researcher had access to the code. Data were kept secure in the researcher's office. The code was destroyed once the study was completed.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The purpose of this study was to analyze the effects of the literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls' confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset by targeting the leadership aspects of growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and awareness of personal strengths. Multiple instruments were created and used to collect data during this study. The data collection materials were researcher-created and administered before, during, and after the intervention. The assessment instrument used for the pre-assessment and post-assessment, *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment*, was used to assess each participant. The assessment results established a baseline for interpreting results and portrayed the participants'



growth in confidence, self-concept, and development of leadership skills at the conclusion of the study.

**Empowering preadolescent girls assessment.** Participants' confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset were measured using the researcher-created pre-assessment and post-program assessment, the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment*. The same instrument was used prior to the intervention and post intervention. The assessment consisted of 40 Likert scale questions and was divided into six sections. There was one section for each of the five aspects of leadership examined during the program and an additional section that addressed literacy and mentoring (See Appendix D). The scale ranged from 1-5, a rating of one expressing "strongly disagree" and a rating of five expressing "strongly agree." The *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* is a researcher-created tool, as the researcher sought to use an assessment that measured self-awareness in each of the five areas of leadership that were targeted in the program. The instrument was adapted from several assessment tools (Bond, Buzwell, Gartland, Olsson, & Sawyer, 2011; Boterhoven de Haan, Hafekost, Lawrence, & Sawyer, 2017; Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008; Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity, 2010; MindsetWorks, Inc., 2012).

**Other data collection instruments.** The purpose of this section is to describe relevant data collection instruments that were used during this study, in addition to the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* previously described. These instruments were beneficial to this study as they were used for monitoring participants' progress throughout the duration of the study. The following are described in the order the data instruments were administered.

**Small group mentor leader application.** The researcher created an application for interested members of Kappa Kappa Gamma, a registered Panhellenic sorority on the campus of

a Northwest Arkansas university, to complete before being selected to serve as small group mentor leaders. The researcher reviewed each application before selecting eight members to serve as small group mentor leaders for the program. The application consisted of four open-ended questions asking applicants to provide information about their involvement within the organization of Kappa Kappa Gamma and campus involvement at the Northwest Arkansas university. Applicants were also asked to provide a rationale for why they feel they should be selected as a small group mentor leader for this program as well as examples of previous leadership and mentorship experience(s) (See Appendix E).

***Parent and/or guardian survey.*** Parents and/or guardians of the participants were asked to complete a survey before and after the program to measure their perceptions of their child's (participant) confidence, self-concept, and leadership qualities. The parent survey was researcher-created and consisted of 14 Likert-scale statements, ranging from 1-5, with a rating of one expressing "strongly disagree" and a rating of five expressing "strongly agree." The survey was included in the initial letter sent home with participants at the beginning of the semester. The survey was administered to parents again after the conclusion of the program (See Appendix C).

***Formative assessments.*** The researcher created journals for the participants which included learning experiences aligned with small group and independent activities relating to each of the five aspects of leadership targeted during the program. At the end of each weekly section in the journal, participants completed a self-reflection that aligned with the targeted aspect of leadership for the given week. The self-reflections were researcher-created and served as formative assessments for the researcher to code and analyze to determine common trends and patterns. Each reflection prompt asked participants to write three things they learned about the

weekly leadership aspect, explain why it is important for leaders to possess that aspect, and describe how they would apply it in their own lives.

Each set of weekly reflections was examined to determine common trends and patterns found within the participants' responses. The responses were coded and analyzed according to each aspect to determine the overall common themes of the program – i.e. what participants learned, why it is important to leadership, and how they would apply it to their own lives (See Appendix F).

***Anecdotal records.*** The researcher created a template for the small group mentor leaders to use during the meeting time for recording observations and behaviors of the participants. The template was designed in the format of a chart and included an outline of all activities that occurred during the weekly meeting time and an adjacent column with space for the leaders to make notes and write comments about their observations of significant behaviors, attitudes, motivation, and comments of the participants (See Appendix G).

***Small group mentor leader evaluation.*** The researcher created an evaluation for small group mentor leaders to complete at the end of the program. The evaluation consisted of 14 questions. The first five questions were short-answer responses requesting information about the small group mentor leaders' experiences, feedback, and suggestions about the program. The remaining statements on the evaluation were ranked using a Likert scale ranging from 1-5, with a rating of one expressing "strongly disagree" and a rating of 5 expressing "strongly agree". This tool provided the researcher with feedback and suggestions from the individuals who served as small group mentor leaders and served the purpose for guiding instruction for following weekly meetings (See Appendix H).

### **Data Collection Methods**

The purpose of this section is to describe the baseline methods and other data collection methods of this study. The researcher used multiple data collection instruments previously described throughout the duration of the study.

**Baseline methods.** Data were collected prior to the first meeting of the program using the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* to establish a baseline of participants' level of confidence, self-concept, awareness of a leadership skillset, and knowledge of each of the five aspects of leadership that were targeted in the program, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**.

Throughout the duration of the program, data were also collected through weekly formative assessments. The same assessment instrument used at the beginning of the program was used at the end of the intervention to measure participants' growth in confidence, self-concept, awareness of a leadership skillset, and knowledge of the five aspects of leadership that were targeted during the intervention program.

**Empowering preadolescent girls assessment.** The *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* was researcher-created and administered as a pre-assessment prior to the start of the program. It measured how each participant perceived herself and confidence in her ability to display each of the five aspects of leadership targeted in the program. The assessment was comprised of a set of statements for each of the five targeted aspects of leadership and a set of statements related to literacy and mentoring. The pre-assessment was administered in an individual setting on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 for the fall program and on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 for the spring program. The home school of participants served as the setting.

**Other data collection methods.** The purpose of this section is to describe other methods used to collect data during this study. The following are described in the order the data was collected.

***Small group mentor leader application.*** The small group mentor leader applications were created as a Google form and released at the beginning of the 2018 fall semester for active women from the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority who were interested in serving as a small group mentor leader. The same application was used at the beginning of the 2019 spring semester. Eight members of Kappa Kappa Gamma who applied were selected to serve as small group mentor leaders, in addition to the researcher, who also served as a small group mentor leader, providing a total of nine mentor leaders for the fall of 2018. Five of the mentors, including the researcher, returned to serve as small group mentor leaders during the spring of 2019, along with four new mentor leaders who were selected in the application process.

***Parent and/or guardian pre-intervention survey.*** The pre-intervention survey for parents and/or guardians was attached to the Parent Consent Form and sent home prior to the start of the program in the participants' Monday folder. The survey was voluntary and measured parents' perceptions of their child's (participant) confidence, self-concept, and leadership qualities.

***Formative assessments.*** The researcher-created formative assessments were completed by participants at the end of each weekly meeting. After the lesson and corresponding activities of each weekly meeting, the participants completed a self-reflection in personal journals. The self-reflections served as formative assessments in order for the researcher to measure participants' growth of the targeted aspects of leadership that were addressed each week and what they learned during the intervention. The formative assessments were coded and analyzed

to examine participants' development of understanding and application of the five targeted aspects of leadership.

***Anecdotal records.*** The mentor leaders were responsible for keeping anecdotal notes during small group instruction to record their observations of significant behaviors, attitudes, motivation, and comments. The anecdotal notes were coded and analyzed to determine trends and patterns that could indicate the effectiveness of the intervention program. The researcher also kept anecdotal notes during each weekly program meeting. The records were coded and analyzed to examine patterns, trends, and changes in the participants' significant behaviors, attitudes, motivation, and comments throughout the five weeks of the program.

***Parent and/or guardian post-intervention survey.*** The same assessment used for the parent pre-intervention survey was administered to parents and/or guardians at the conclusion of the program. The pre-intervention and post-intervention survey were compared and analyzed to determine if there were any significant changes in parents' perceptions of their child's (participant) confidence, self-concept, and leadership qualities after completing **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**. A paired-sample *t*-test was conducted at a 0.01 alpha level to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the parent pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys.

***Small group mentor leader evaluation.*** The evaluation was created as a Google form and sent via email to the small group mentor leaders at the conclusion of each intervention program in both the fall and spring semester. The researcher reviewed the evaluations at the end of the fall semester and considered the suggestions and feedback when planning for the spring semester.

**Post-intervention data analysis.** The same assessment used for the pre-assessment was administered at the conclusion of the program. The pre-assessment and post-assessment were compared and analyzed to determine any significant changes in the participants' average scores after completing the intervention program, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**. A paired-sample *t*-test was conducted at a 0.01 alpha level to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment results. The post-assessment was administered in an individual setting on October 9th, 2018 for the fall program and on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 for the spring program. The home school of participants served as the setting.

### **Intervention Strategies**

The intervention for this study was implemented in a middle school setting during the 2018-2019 academic calendar year of the school district. A total of sixty-eight preadolescent girls participated in an after-school program for a three-hour intervention, one day per week for a five-week period. Each week, the lesson focused on an aspect of leadership, a theme guided by each letter of the word GIRLS: (G)rowth Mindset, (I)ntegrity, (R)esilience, (L)ove and Loyalty, and (S)trengths. The format for each week was similar in structure and included whole group instruction, small mentor-led groups that were collaborative with learning activities and discussion guided by the mentors, and independent application with opportunities for practice of the targeted aspect of leadership. The researcher created the curriculum for the program and trained the small group mentor leaders each week for effectiveness in conducting small group lessons and activities.

**Schedule and lesson plans.** Participants met during a five-week period in the fall and spring semesters of 2018-2019 on a weekly basis in an after-school program, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. Participants were provided with a snack and then the meeting

began with a team building activity. Each meeting consisted of whole group instruction, collaborative small group activities led by collegiate mentor leaders, independent practice, and journal activities. The researcher designed the curriculum and lesson plans for the program with objectives, procedures, and engagement activities for each of the five aspects of leadership (See Appendix I).

The participants met as a whole group to begin the program each week of the intervention. The researcher read from selected literature, a children's book that focused on the weekly theme and corresponded with a letter of GIRLS which aligned with the weekly targeted aspect of leadership. A whole group discussion allowed participants to identify and associate with traits of characters from the book to develop an awareness of leadership and improve their confidence and self-concept. After a whole group discussion and learning activity, the participants transitioned into five small groups led by collegiate women mentor leaders. The counselor pre-determined the small groups for the fall program; however, the researcher determined the groups for the spring program. Participants spent the majority of the meeting in their small groups, which provided opportunities for discussion and engagement in learning activities that related to the weekly theme that aligned with a targeted aspect of leadership. The independent practice activities, including self-reflection, allowed participants to assess personal areas of strength and areas for improvement in each of the five aspects of leadership. Participants were provided with time to reflect and consider real-life application of the leadership skillset being developed in this intervention. The weekly lesson plans aligned with the five social and emotional learning competencies of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). These competencies include self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness (Collaborative for



Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2017). Table 1 illustrates the timeline of lessons, including the weekly targeted aspect of leadership and description of the lesson objective.

Table 1

*Timeline of Lesson Dates and Weekly Targeted Aspects of Leadership*

Date of Lesson	Lesson Description
Week 1 September 11, 2018 January 29, 2019	<b><u>Growth Mindset</u></b> <u>Objective:</u> Participants will learn what it means to have a growth mindset and the importance of goal setting in moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset
Week 2 September 18, 2018 February 5, 2019	<b><u>Integrity</u></b> <u>Objective:</u> Participants will explore the idea of taking responsibility for their own actions and showing kindness and respect to others
Week 3 September 25, 2018 February 12, 2019	<b><u>Resilience</u></b> <u>Objective:</u> Participants will practice viewing obstacles and challenges as learning opportunities while keeping a positive mindset
Week 4 October 2, 2018 February 19, 2019	<b><u>Love and Loyalty</u></b> <u>Objective:</u> Participants will understand the importance of taking care of yourself and staying true to personal goals and values
Week 5 October 9, 2018 February 26, 2019	<b><u>Strengths</u></b> <u>Objective:</u> Participants will become aware of their own strengths, discover how to effectively practice them, and learn to appreciate the strengths of others

**Small group mentor leaders.** Active members selected from the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority served as small group mentor leaders for ***GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise***. The participants were divided into five groups, with five to six participants for each small group, guided by two mentor leaders. Before the program began, interested members of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority completed an application to volunteer as a mentor for this program. There were nine small group mentor leaders for the program during the fall of 2018 and nine mentors selected for

the program in the spring of 2019. From the nine fall mentor leaders, five returned to serve as leaders in the spring, including the researcher. The leaders facilitated their small group each week, recorded anecdotal notes during their small group time, and established mentoring relationships with the participants in their group. The researcher trained the leaders weekly, prior to the meeting time, preparing them for discussion topics and reviewing curriculum goals and procedures for facilitating small group, mentor-led instruction. At the end of the program, the small group leaders completed an evaluation providing their feedback on the program, which included how their small group of participants responded to the curriculum and suggestions for improvement.

**Week one.** Week One of the program focused on the leadership aspect, *growth mindset*. The lesson and learning activities were guided by the idea that participants can develop a growth mindset by understanding that their brains have the ability to grow and develop. Carol Dweck (2016) describes this mindset as one that affects the way people lead their lives and allows them to thrive during challenging times. The researcher selected the book *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires to read to the participants and discussed that having a growth mindset means believing that our intelligence, skills, and abilities can be improved with effort and the right strategies. This book was selected because it provides an example of a young, female character who has an idea, or goal, but faces many failures that she must overcome. The character sets an example of having a growth mindset. The researcher used the gradual release of responsibility teaching model throughout the process of each week by first introducing the targeted weekly leadership aspect, engaging participants through whole group instruction and then transitioning to small group, mentor-led activities to further their understanding. This

provided an opportunity for participants to apply the targeted aspect of leadership for the week to their own lives.

When participants transitioned to small groups for further discussion and activities, each group was given a task of creating a “magnificent thing” using a variety of materials and supplies that were randomly selected by the researcher. The mentor leaders guided their groups on what they should create. Examples included: the longest thing, the tallest thing, the strongest thing, etc. The activity required the participants to think differently about how the materials provided could be used to accomplish the specified task. The next small group activity focused on setting goals. Because goal setting is important in moving from a fixed to a growth mindset, each participant was encouraged to set three goals— a short-term goal, a long-term goal, and a reading goal. The participants developed an action plan consisting of three action steps for each of their goals. Participants reassembled as a whole group at the end of the afternoon for closure of the lesson on the targeted aspect of leadership. The researcher assisted the participants in creating a chart of fixed versus growth mindset statements and examples. Participants then completed a self-reflection on growth mindset, which served as the formative assessment for Week One.

The topic of growth mindset discussed during Week One aligns with the social and emotional learning competencies of self-awareness and self-management. Self-awareness involves the ability to assess one’s strengths and limitations with a growth mindset (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2017). Goal setting is a self-management practice, which contributes to the transition of moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset. As participants practice setting goals, they increase self-efficacy, a component of self-awareness. Achieving goals and increasing self-efficacy contributes to adolescents setting additional and more challenging goals, therefore increasing their self-awareness through

self-reflection (Schunk, 1990). The curriculum and activities of Week One were designed around the essential research questions: *Will understanding that the brain is malleable and can grow and change by moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset increase confidence, self-concept, and leadership potential?* and *What are the effects of this program on preadolescent girls' confidence in their abilities to set and achieve goals for themselves?*

**Week one reflection.** Referencing anecdotal records, the researcher reflected on the meeting to determine which parts of the learning activities worked well and which needed improvement. The researcher made minimal changes to the growth mindset lesson plan for the program conducted in the spring of 2019. The researcher assigned tasks to each group during the “Magnificent Thing” activity in order to provide more structure and guidance for the small group mentor leaders and activity. The fall 2018 participants were familiar with the growth mindset aspect and moved through the activities more quickly than anticipated. It was noted that there was more time allotted for small group activities than needed, so the researcher included an additional activity, a Growth Mindset Escape Room, during the second implementation of the program in the spring of 2019. Observations of the small groups indicated that the mentor-led groups were finishing activities at various times, so the researcher provided mentor leaders with additional activities for the following weeks if time allowed.

**Week two.** Week Two focused on *integrity* which is defined as taking responsibility for your own actions, being respectful and kind to others, and making the right choice even when others are not watching. The researcher used the five fundamental values of integrity – respect, responsibility, fairness, trustworthiness, and honesty – to introduce the leadership aspect (Price-Mitchell, 2015). Integrity was depicted as the all-encompassing umbrella of the five values. *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* by Carol McCloud served as the selected literature for Week

Two. The activities for this week centered around character education and ways to be respectful and kind to others, which in essence related to the lesson portrayed in the book for how to be a “bucket-filler”. Participants created their own “buckets” to fill with evidence of their actions of integrity that included respect and kindness over the remaining weeks of the program. The whole group discussion was guided by the idea that a bucket-filler is someone who shows integrity, and participants were able to explore why it is important for leaders to show integrity. The five values of integrity demonstrated for participants the importance of becoming more aware of the needs and experiences of others. Exploring these values enables girls to stand up for themselves and others and allows them to discover their own personal values and beliefs. During small group mentor-led instruction, participants determined their personal values and examples of how they display their values each week. The groups then investigated precepts used in the book *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio. Each group was assigned one of the precepts from the book and the participants created a skit displaying how the precept related to the aspect of integrity. Participants developed skits related to real-life situations, making the leadership aspect relevant and applicable to their lives. At the conclusion of Week Two, the participants developed a **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise*** Mission Statement collectively composing three commitments – a commitment to self, others, and their school. This statement served as their “mission” for the remaining weeks of the program. The researcher created and distributed a Random Acts of Kindness Integrity Bingo sheet to the participants at the conclusion of the Week Two meeting. The participants were challenged to complete as many “random acts of kindness” as they could by the end of the five-week intervention. They could return the sheet each week and receive a “drop” in the buckets they created for every act of kindness they completed.

Integrity aligns with the social and emotional learning competencies of self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. As girls become more aware of themselves and of others' needs and experiences (social awareness), they are able to develop healthy relationships and feel more empowered to stand up for their values and beliefs, as well as others, increasing their self-efficacy (Price-Mitchell, 2015). Character education helps adolescent girls develop responsibility for their own actions (responsible decision-making) and recognize their own values (self-awareness). The essential research question examined for Week Two was, *Will the program, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**, improve preadolescent girls' understanding of the importance of taking responsibility for their own actions, being respectful of others, and acting in ways consistent with their values?*

**Week two reflection.** Participants responded extremely well to the group skits and were able to apply their understanding of integrity to a real-life scenario. Because of the positive response, the researcher decided to include a skit activity into the Week Three lesson. For the spring 2019 program, the researcher revised the activity to introduce the five fundamental values of integrity, providing the participants with an activity that was more interactive and required team building skills. The spring 2019 participants decorated tin buckets to "fill" over the next three weeks instead of plastic cups given during the initial semester of the program. This tangible artifact could have had a more positive impact on the engagement and motivation for the bucket-filling activities. After the researcher received a supportive comment from a parent (fall 2018) about how the positive notes that were placed in her daughter's bucket by other participants throughout the program were meaningful to her, the researcher decided to make the activity of the small group members writing notes to each other more intentional for the spring 2019 program implementation. The researcher also made an instructional decision to move the

mission statement activity as part of the first week of the 2019 spring program, instead of the second week, so that participants could practice forward thinking and record what they hoped to gain from the program.

**Week three. *Resilience*** was the theme for Week Three of **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***. The whole group read the book, *She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World*, by Chelsea Clinton. Participants discussed the importance of viewing obstacles and failures as opportunities for growth and learning. During small group, mentor-led instruction, each participant developed an “I am..., I can..., and I have...” statement. Identifying what you can do, what you have, and who you are is helpful in building resilience, which is the process of using personal characteristics and resources in one’s environment to overcome adversity (Bond, Buzwell, Gartland, Olsson, & Sawyer, 2011). Each group completed a character profile on a famous female in history, known for being resilient in the face of challenges and adversity. This activity helped the participants put themselves “in the shoes” of the female figure and gain perspective of situations she faced. Participants revisited the goals they set for themselves on Week One and reflected on the accomplishments and the challenges faced with each goal. They viewed the challenges with a growth mindset (Week One) and determined how they could view them as learning opportunities. After reflecting on their goals, the participants were asked to imagine that they had been featured in the *She Persisted* book and create a paper version social media profile of what they would be known or recognized for by others. The small groups also discussed how they might consider what resilience looks like in the five levels of our environment: individual, family, peers, school, and community (Bond, Buzwell, Gartland, Olsson, & Sawyer, 2011). Each group was assigned a specific environmental level and created a

skit depicting a challenging scenario that could be faced within their respective level and how the challenge could be overcome using resilience.

The social and emotional learning competencies aligning with resilience include self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills. As girls transition into adolescence, they begin to lack self-confidence, which decreases their self-awareness. Resilience instills the readiness to turn failures and obstacles into fuel for renewed determination (Glangchai, 2018b) and therefore increases self-motivation, a key component to self-management. Working through conflicts and challenges within different environment contexts enables adolescents to build and maintain healthy relationships with diverse individuals and groups. Week Three examined the research question, *Will teaching preadolescent girls about resilience increase their confidence and self-concept to make good choices when facing challenges?*

***Week three reflection.*** Week Three was the strongest week for the fall 2018 intervention in regard to participant engagement, motivation, and participation. The term “resilience” was new for many of the participants, therefore, the lesson for Week Three was more challenging and was not considered a review of familiar content, as Week One and Week Two might have been perceived. The researcher added the skit activity to the lesson plan after the positive responses received from the participants during Week Two. Week Three was the first week participants received “drops” in their buckets for the acts they completed from the Random Acts of Kindness Integrity Bingo. The drops for the spring 2019 intervention, however, specified the integrity acts that participants completed, whereas the drops for the 2018 fall intervention did not. For each act completed, the spring 2019 participants also signed a Random Acts of Kindness Integrity Board in the respective squares that corresponded to the completed act. There were more participants in the spring program, so the size of each small group was larger than in the fall.



Because of the larger size, some small groups further divided during the character study activity and created two character profiles on a famous female in history, known for being resilient in the face of challenge and adversity. Spring 2019 self-reflections were not as thorough and many participants completed the “What I learned” section but not the application piece.

**Week four.** During Week Four, the group discussed *love and loyalty*. Participants explored the idea of love of self and being loyal to personal values and goals. The literature selected for this week was *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon* by Patty Lovell. The character in the book has many different features that make her unique. Her grandmother helps her see all of her special characteristics in a positive way. Participants of the program were asked to think about one feature they have that they would like to change. The researcher then reviewed the grandmother’s four quotes from the book and asked participants to select one of the quotes that resonated with them the most. They were asked to think about how that quote helps them consider the one thing they would change about themselves in a positive way, which related to Week One’s theme of growth mindset. While in the whole group setting, each participant created an “I Am...” pennant flag. Each participant designed a pennant with positive and empowering words about herself.

In the small, mentor-led groups, the participants completed two personal journal activities. One revisited the three goals that the participants set for themselves in Week One. Participants were asked to reflect on each goal and the steps they have taken toward completing the goal. Participants wrote “praises” or positive words to themselves for the steps they have taken and the challenges they have overcome or are working through. The next journal activity had participants reflect on the five values they selected in Week Two and list ways they display those values every day or week. This activity tied to the loyalty aspect of the weekly theme

aligned with the targeted leadership aspect and demonstrated to participants how staying true to your values is an important part of leadership. Small group mentor leaders then discussed how being able to recognize, control, and maintain positive emotions is a part of loving yourself and staying true to who you are personally. Each group examined eight different emotions and discussed positive actions to take when experiencing each emotion. For the final activity of the afternoon, participants created a Girl Wheel. The Girl Wheel was developed by Heart and Sole to help preadolescent girls understand how to balance the five different areas of their lives: brain, body, social, heart, and spirit (Britt, 2015). In the small groups, participants discussed the five different areas of ourselves that need care and discussed ways that one can show love for self in each area. However, each participant created her own Girl Wheel with self-care habits specific to her five areas.

The theme of Love and Loyalty aligns with the social and emotional learning competencies of self-awareness, self-management, and responsible decision-making. As preadolescent girls begin to increasingly compare themselves to their peers, their self-confidence decreases (self-awareness). It is essential to their well-being that they are taught self-care habits and to value who they are personally. This relates to responsible decision-making, as preadolescents become more aware of themselves and others, they begin to consider their own well-being and the well-being of others when making decisions and evaluating the consequences. Identifying emotions is a key component of self-awareness. Once girls learn to identify their emotions, they are empowered to learn how to regulate and manage their emotions (self-management). In relation to resilience, managing emotions and behaviors cultivates self-motivation, even in the face of challenging situations, which therefore, increases self-confidence. Week Four focused on the essential research question, *Will GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise*

*encourage preadolescent girls to appreciate and love who they are, take care of themselves, and stay loyal and true to their own goals and values?*

**Week four reflection.** By Week Four, participants were more comfortable with each other and the group as a whole. They really enjoyed creating the “I Am...” flags and Girl Wheels. Both activities allowed the participants to make a tangible item that they could take home and share with parents. The participants grappled with the idea of leaders having to take care of themselves and how this aspect affects the way that they lead. Adolescence is an age where students are becoming more self-conscious of how others view them which makes it difficult for them to self-reflect on who they are as a person in regard to their interests, abilities, and qualities. The first question participants asked on Week Four during both implementations of the program was, “Are we doing a skit today?” The researcher was able to see that the groups enjoyed using performing arts to display and express their knowledge. It is also noted that participants had difficulty making connections and relating the theme of love and loyalty to the first three aspects of leadership targeted in Weeks One through Three of the program – growth mindset, integrity, and resilience.

**Week five.** Week Five focused on the leadership aspect of *strengths*. Participants considered their unique personal strengths and how they can effectively exercise their strengths in the many areas of their lives. The structure of the meeting for Week Five was slightly different than the previous weeks. Participants began as they usually did in a large group setting while the researcher read the selected literature piece for the week, *Red: A Crayon’s Story*, by Michael Hall. This book conveys the message that everyone has different strengths, and it is important to not only recognize and discover your personal strengths, but also to appreciate those of others. After the book was read, participants completed a Leadership Style Assessment and

divided into groups according to their leadership “color” – red, yellow, blue, or green. The small group mentor leaders took the assessment prior to the meeting and were assigned as leaders for their respective leadership color group. In the leadership small groups, participants explored the strengths and weaknesses of their particular leadership style and discussed different ways to use their strengths. Participants selected what they believe were their top six strengths and created a “Tree of Strengths.” (Appendix J)

After completing the activities in the leadership groups, participants divided into their original small, mentor-led groups. Each of the five groups was assigned one of the leadership aspects discussed previously in the five-week intervention: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths. The groups created a skit and visual representation of this particular aspect. Parents were invited to a celebration of the participants’ completion of the program at the end of the fifth meeting. Each group presented the poster and skit they created, and all participants received a certificate for completion of the program. The parents observed what their daughters had learned and the activities completed over the course of the five-week intervention.

The theme of Week Five, *strengths*, aligned with the self-awareness and social awareness social and emotional learning competencies. Recognizing and assessing one’s own strengths and limitations (self-awareness) helps broaden the definition of leadership for adolescents and expands their view of leadership. Adolescent girls feel empowered when they recognize their strengths and how their strengths can be used in the different levels of their environment (Bond, Buzwell, Gartland, Olsson, & Sawyer, 2011), which were discussed in alignment with Week Three and the aspect of resilience. As girls begin to understand that an area of weakness for them may be a strength to someone else, they develop an appreciation for diversity and respect

for others (social awareness). Girls' self-confidence increases as they recognize and appreciate the strengths of others rather than comparing themselves to peers or feeling the need to "measure up" to others. The curriculum for Week Five was designed around the essential research question, *What are the effects of **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise** on preadolescent girls' perceptions of their own personal strengths and how these strengths can be developed through the lens of a leadership skillset?*

**Week five reflection.** The researcher and small group mentor leaders noticed a difference in the participants from Week One to Week Five. Participants were more confident in themselves and were more inclusive with each other. When participants arrived on Week Five, the whole group sat in one large circle during snack time without prompting. They enjoyed the Leadership Assessment activity, which allowed them to see the different styles of leadership among their peers. Participants were interested in learning about their particular style and having discussions with others who share their leadership color. At the conclusion of Week Five, the researcher asked, "Who met someone new or made a new friend over the past five weeks?" Every girl in the group raised her hand.

### **Summary**

The study examined the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls' confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset by targeting the aspects of growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and personal strengths. This chapter described the setting of the study, the participants, the methods used for collecting data, and the intervention strategies in an attempt to answer the question "What are the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls' confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset?"

## **Chapter IV**

### **Results**

This chapter provides an analysis of data collected for this study designed to address the research question, “What are the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls’ development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset?” Data are presented in narrative text and supported by tables and figures. A mixed methods design was used for collection along with analyzation of qualitative and quantitative data. The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on the development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset with a group of preadolescent girls. The participants for this study consisted of sixty-eight preadolescent girls in a middle school that serves fifth and sixth grade students in Northwest Arkansas.

### **Intervention**

Over the course of this study, preadolescent girls participated in a five-week intervention with opportunities to develop confidence, improve self-concept, and become aware of personal leadership skills through a five-week literacy-based, mentoring program. The goal of the program was to foster and improve participants’ understanding of targeted aspects in a leadership skillset. The program was implemented in a middle school setting during the fall and spring semester of the 2018-2019 academic calendar year.

A total of 68 preadolescent girls participated in a five-week after school program for a three-hour intervention, one day per week. Each week, the lesson focused on an aspect of leadership, a theme guided by each letter of the word GIRLS: (G)rowth Mindset, (I)ntegrity, (R)esilience, (L)ove and Loyalty, and (S)trengths. The format for each week was similar in structure and included whole group instruction, small groups that were collaborative with

learning activities and discussion guided by a mentor, and independent application with opportunities for practice of the targeted aspect of leadership. Data were collected through pre-assessments and post-assessments, weekly formative assessments which included participant self-reflections, and anecdotal notes that were coded and analyzed to determine patterns and trends. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The results of this study represent the effects of the program, **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***, an intervention for preadolescent girls to foster and improve participants' understanding of confidence, self-concept and leadership skillset through opportunities to develop targeted aspects of leadership during each week of the intervention.

### **Baseline Data**

In order to establish baseline data, the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* was used to measure participants' level of confidence, self-concept, and self-awareness of a leadership skillset at the beginning of the study, before implementing the weekly opportunities to develop targeted aspects of leadership. Participants' overall level of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset was measured through their understanding and awareness of the five leadership aspects: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths.

A total of 68 preadolescent girls participated in this intervention; however, the mean scores for 48 participants were used in the data analysis. The 48 participants completed a pre-assessment and post-assessment with consent from parents for their scores to be included in the data analysis. Of the 48 participants, 11 omitted at least one item on the pre-assessment. For the purposes of validity, the researcher averaged scores for the assessment item from all participants who completed the item and used the value for the participant(s) who omitted the answer on that assessment item.

In order for the test items to be valid, the researcher reverse scored statements 18, 20, 21, 24, and 33 which were negatively worded, meaning they were phrased so that the desirable outcome was a lower score (e.g. I worry about what people are thinking about me). It is anticipated that after the course of this intervention, the score for this statement would decrease. In order to reverse score these specific items, the numerical scoring scale (1-5) is run in the opposite direction. A value of five therefore expresses “strongly disagree” and a value of one expresses “strongly agree”. The statements were reverse scored before finding the average scores on the pre-assessment and post-assessment.

The *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* was administered in an individual setting during the week of September 10, 2018 and on January 29, 2019. The home school of the participants served as the setting for this research study. The mean of the data obtained was 4.10; the mode was 4.275; the median of the data was 4.15, and the range of the data was 1.62. The highest score was 4.85 and 3.23 was the lowest score. See Appendix K for the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* pre-intervention scores.

### **During Intervention**

During the intervention, data were collected to determine participants’ growth in confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset through the five targeted aspects of leadership examined each week of the intervention: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths. Data included formative assessments which were given each week of the intervention and anecdotal observations. Anecdotal records included information such as researcher observations, student comments, and mentor observations.

**Weekly formative assessments.** Participants completed a self-reflection at the end of each week in their personal journals. The self-reflection served as the formative assessment and



prompted participants to write three things they learned about the weekly theme and asked them to explain why it is important for leaders to possess that aspect and how they would apply it to their own lives. Weekly formative assessments were coded and analyzed to determine patterns and trends of the qualitative data. The formative assessments were used to measure the essential research question for each week of the program, along with the data analysis of the pre-assessment and post-assessment when divided by leadership aspect. Table 2 provides a complete record of the trends and patterns from the formative assessments in alignment with the aspects of leadership targeted each week.

***Growth mindset.*** Common patterns and trends seen from the formative assessment in Week One include participants indicating their belief that mistakes are proof you are trying and can create learning opportunities. Participants made application of this aspect relevant to their lives and found areas within their personal lives to use a growth mindset, such as school subjects, sports, and outside activities. Their responses reflected an understanding that a growth mindset is used by leaders to help them grow, set an example for others, set goals, and face challenges.

***Integrity.*** Participants' weekly formative responses from Week Two reveal that they were able to associate "filling a bucket" with displaying the five values of integrity. The application examples participants provided were actions that others may not necessarily see or acknowledge; therefore, participants understood that they may not be recognized for their actions. They understood that integrity means doing the right thing, even when no one is looking. Regarding leadership, participant responses reflected the idea that leaders are looked up to and set an example for others.

***Resilience.*** Based on the weekly formative assessment responses from Week Three, participants learned that resilience means to "bounce back" and to persist. Many of them made

the connection between resilience and growth mindset in staying positive and learning from mistakes. The participants identified school and family as two areas where they can apply resilience in their lives by finding the positive and identifying what they *can* do. Their responses reflect the importance of resilience for leaders because it helped them face problems, stay strong and bounce back, and not give up on their dreams and goals.

***Love and loyalty.*** Common trends and patterns gathered from the weekly formative assessments from Week Four include taking care of yourself in order to help take care of others, doing what makes you happy, believing in yourself, and setting an example of respecting yourself to be a role model for others. Ideas for application included getting more sleep, taking care of your body, and encouraging self by a positive attitude. A trend seen in the importance of this aspect to leadership was that others need to see what self-respect looks like. Setting an example will allow others to learn from you.

***Strengths.*** Responses to weekly formative assessments from Week Five show that participants learned that everyone has strengths, though they may be different. Common themes in how participants would apply what they learned were using their strengths to help others, encouraging others to use their own strengths, and working together.

Table 2

*Trends and Patterns from Formative Assessments*

<b>Week/ Leadership Aspect</b>	<b>What I learned:</b>	<b>How I can apply it:</b>	<b>Why it is important for me, as a leader, to have this aspect:</b>
Week 1: <i>Growth Mindset</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never give up</li> <li>• Stay positive</li> <li>• Be respectful</li> <li>• Keep trying even when you make mistakes</li> <li>• Plasticity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School – math, studying, in class, P.E. ELA</li> <li>• Sports &amp; Activities – basketball, cooking, reading, cheer</li> <li>• Friendships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To grow and succeed</li> <li>• Facing challenges and overcoming them</li> <li>• Be a role model and set an example</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinking outside the box</li> <li>• Helps you learn</li> <li>• Learn from criticism and mistakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “My courage or just believing in myself more.” – Participant 46</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set goals for yourself and accomplish them</li> <li>• Grow your brain</li> <li>• Learn better than before</li> <li>• Lead people in right direction</li> <li>• Have a better future</li> <li>• “Because, if you as a leader does not, then who will?” – Participant 32</li> </ul>
Week 2: <i>Integrity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be kind and caring</li> <li>• Be a friend not a bully</li> <li>• Five values</li> <li>• “It’s the root of the kindness tree” – Participant 25</li> <li>• Being responsible</li> <li>• Filling people’s buckets</li> <li>• “I learned that integrity is choosing courage over comfort” – Participant 33</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping others—holding the door for someone, helping a new student with their schedule, helping someone with their locker</li> <li>• Positive words</li> <li>• Be respectful to others</li> <li>• Sit with someone new</li> <li>• Examples participants gave of how they could show integrity were actions that others may not necessarily see or acknowledge – they understood that integrity means doing the right thing, even when no one is looking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set an example</li> <li>• To gain trust</li> <li>• “You need to show integrity where the followers will become your friend” – Participant 10</li> <li>• Be a role model</li> <li>• “Always know people look up to you” – Participant 32</li> <li>• Strong leaders</li> <li>• Others will want to follow leaders with integrity</li> <li>• “So people will want to acknowledge your ideas.” – Participant 39</li> </ul>
Week 3: <i>Resilience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relates to growth mindset</li> <li>• Keep trying – bounce back</li> <li>• Stay positive and persist</li> <li>• Need to be strong and confident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School</li> <li>• Looking at what I can do</li> <li>• Family</li> <li>• Find the positive in all situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You learn how to face problems</li> <li>• Stay strong when things get tough</li> <li>• Don’t quit or give up on dreams and goals</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mistakes help you learn</li> <li>• Comes in different forms (<i>levels of environment</i>)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to face problems and bounce back</li> <li>• Learn from mistakes</li> </ul>
Week 4: <i>Love &amp; Loyalty</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take care of and believe in yourself</li> <li>• Do what makes you happy</li> <li>• Have confidence</li> <li>• Take care of yourself and others</li> <li>• “You have to love yourself to grow” – Participant 39</li> <li>• “You have to believe yourself before you can believe you can grow” – Participant 39</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat</li> <li>• Get more sleep</li> <li>• Be kind to others</li> <li>• Encourage myself</li> <li>• Stay healthy</li> <li>• Take care of my body</li> <li>• Do what makes me happy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe in myself and accomplish my goals</li> <li>• Others can learn from you and you can teach others how to be a leader</li> <li>• “So you never quit and conquer your dreams” – Participant 12</li> <li>• “Other people need to see what self-respect looks like” – Participant 32</li> <li>• Respect yourself</li> </ul>
Week 5: <i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If you work together then you can learn more strengths” – Participant 13</li> <li>• Everyone has strengths, though they may be different</li> <li>• “use them wisely” – Participant 8</li> <li>• Strengths are things you are good at</li> <li>• Not everybody is good at everything</li> <li>• We all have weaknesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep a growth mindset and stay positive</li> <li>• Do what I love</li> <li>• Encourage others</li> <li>• Use them to help others</li> <li>• Work with others and their strengths</li> <li>• Don’t criticize others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “So I can be the best me” – Participant 20</li> <li>• To make a difference</li> <li>• To be the best leader I can be</li> <li>• Work well with others</li> <li>• “you have to know yourself to be a leader and show others” – Participant 5</li> <li>• “It is important to know what you are good at when challenges come your way” – Participant 30</li> <li>• “You can use your strengths to help others find theirs” – Participant 41</li> </ul>

\*Note: The trends and patterns from weekly formative assessments are in alignment with the aspects of leadership targeted each week.

**Anecdotal records.** The researcher and small group mentor leaders took anecdotal notes during each weekly meeting of the program to record behaviors, comments, and observations of participants. Observations and anecdotal notes aligned with the lesson theme and learning activities that targeted the aspect of leadership for each week.

**Researcher anecdotal notes.** The researcher observed participants during whole group lessons and learning activities throughout the study and recorded results through anecdotal notes. These notes included the researcher's reflections on the effectiveness and impact of the program themes for each week. The notes detail participant engagement levels, activities that worked well, activities that needed improvement, and how well the researcher thought the participants made personal connections to the targeted aspects of leadership for each of the weekly lessons. Table 3 provides a complete record of the researcher's anecdotal notes.

Table 3

*Researcher Anecdotal Notes*

Whole-Group Instruction			
Week	Response/Observations	Patterns and Trends	Research Implications
Week 1: <i>Growth Mindset</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a smaller, typical classroom</li> <li>• Tighter space</li> <li>• Came in to get snack and sat in rows before starting program</li> <li>• Comment about opposite of growth mindset is "shrinking mindset"</li> <li>• Girls wanted to write their own responses on chart paper for fixed vs. growth mindset activity</li> <li>• Some were getting restless at end during whole-group instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shy and nervous at beginning</li> <li>• Very attentive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same gender environment</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Self-management</li> <li>• Relationship skills</li> </ul>

<p>Week 2: <i>Integrity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excited about idea of creating own buckets to fill</li> <li>• Had a difficult time narrowing down to five values</li> <li>• Even more difficult selecting one</li> <li>• Eyes opened to how everyone in group had different values</li> <li>• Participants responded extremely well to the skits – researcher modified the next week’s original lesson to incorporate a skit</li> <li>• Strongest week in spring group</li> <li>• The girls did very well with the marker activity</li> <li>• Worked together, concentrated, focused on task</li> <li>• Gasps when introduced books (excited)</li> <li>• Girls were excited about idea of getting to fill each other’s buckets</li> <li>• Really put time and effort into creating their buckets</li> <li>• All of the groups wanted to perform skit first</li> <li>• Hard to stay focused – wanted to know what was for dinner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More comfortable with each other and leaders</li> <li>• Participants were extremely excited about creating a skit</li> <li>• Enjoyed idea of writing positive notes to others and brainstorming kind acts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing arts in adolescent development</li> <li>• Appetite of adolescents</li> <li>• Service learning</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Social awareness</li> <li>• Responsible decision-making</li> <li>• Relationship skills</li> </ul>
<p>Week 3: <i>Resilience</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strongest week for fall group</li> <li>• Wanted to keep going and try to get the ball to everyone before it hit the ground</li> <li>• Tennis ball example resonated with the girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much more comfortable with each other and leaders</li> <li>• Able to connect with tangible and visual item of resilience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual representation of aspect</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Self-management</li> <li>• Relationship skills</li> </ul>

	<p>and helped them better understand resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many remembered “bounce back”</li> <li>• Social Media Profile allowed girls to dream big &amp; see the big picture</li> <li>• Put a lot of thought into what they wanted to do and be known for</li> <li>• Confusion and questioning of connecting the three aspects at end</li> <li>• Many wrote “bounce back” in self-reflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using “performance arts”</li> </ul>	
<p>Week 4: <i>Love &amp; Loyalty</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did not take mirror activity very seriously</li> <li>• Decided to incorporate motions to quote to “perform”</li> <li>• Really enjoyed making pennant flags and designing it to reflect who they are</li> <li>• Some difficulty in connecting Love and Loyalty to first three themes</li> <li>• Girls enjoyed sitting in a big group together</li> <li>• Really focused on breathing exercises</li> <li>• Made connection that weekly “themes” go along with the letters of the word GIRLS</li> <li>• New ropes in Fitness Corral – difficulty keeping girls off of equipment</li> <li>• Very honest in their answers about what they would change about themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have become very comfortable in whole group – “inner circle” groups disappearing</li> <li>• Rowdy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-compassion</li> <li>• High energy levels of adolescents</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Self-management</li> <li>• Responsible decision-making</li> <li>• Relationship skills</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very focused on designing their pennant flags</li> <li>• Girls were proud of how they were able to describe and represent themselves</li> <li>• Began storming toward end of program, quick wrap up</li> <li>• Parent shared with me that she walked in on her daughter writing positive notes to complete RAK box</li> </ul>		
Week 5: <i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants sat together in one large circle at the beginning of meeting without being prompted</li> <li>• Loved Oreo activity – allowed them to be silly</li> <li>• Found it interesting to learn about their leadership color</li> <li>• 5th graders completed the assessment more efficiently than 6th grade</li> <li>• 5th grade took more time creating their puzzle piece with top strength</li> <li>• Asked “Who met someone new or made a new friend?” – every girl raised her hand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More comfortable and familiar with each other</li> <li>• More inclusive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring relationships</li> <li>• Taking perspective of others</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Social awareness</li> <li>• Relationship skills</li> </ul>

***Small group mentor leader anecdotal notes.*** The small group mentor leaders were also responsible for recording observations of participants during small group activities. The researcher compiled the anecdotal notes of the small group mentor leaders to analyze the overall observations and effects of the learning activities on the participants’ awareness and development of the targeted aspects of leadership for each week. The notes detail participant



engagement levels during small group, mentor-led instruction, small group activities that were effective, activities that needed improvement, and how well the mentor leaders thought the participants made personal connections to the targeted aspects of leadership for each of the weekly lessons. The patterns and trends of the anecdotal notes recorded by the small group mentor leaders were used to support the researcher's reflections on the effectiveness and impact of the program themes for each week. See Appendix L for a complete record of the small group mentor leaders' anecdotal notes.

### **Post Intervention**

The *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* was also administered to participants at the end of the intervention to measure growth in their overall level of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset through the understanding and awareness of the five targeted leadership aspects which include growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths.

The *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* was administered as a post-intervention assessment on the final meeting date of the program. As the researcher analyzed the post-assessments for each participant, it was observed that ten participants omitted at least one item on the post-assessment. For the purposes of validity, the researcher averaged the scores for the assessment item from all participants who completed the item and used the value for the participant(s) who omitted the answer on that assessment item. The mean of the data obtained was 4.23; the mode was 4.525 and 4.575; the median of the data was 4.33, and the range of the data was 1.50. The highest score was a 4.83 and 3.33 was the lowest score. Refer to the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* post-intervention scores in Appendix K. When comparing the pre-assessment and post-assessment averages of each participant on the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment*, the data revealed that twenty-nine students, or

60% of the participants, increased their average scores from pre-assessment to post-assessment.

The average pre-assessment value and post-assessment value of each participant are illustrated in Figure 3.

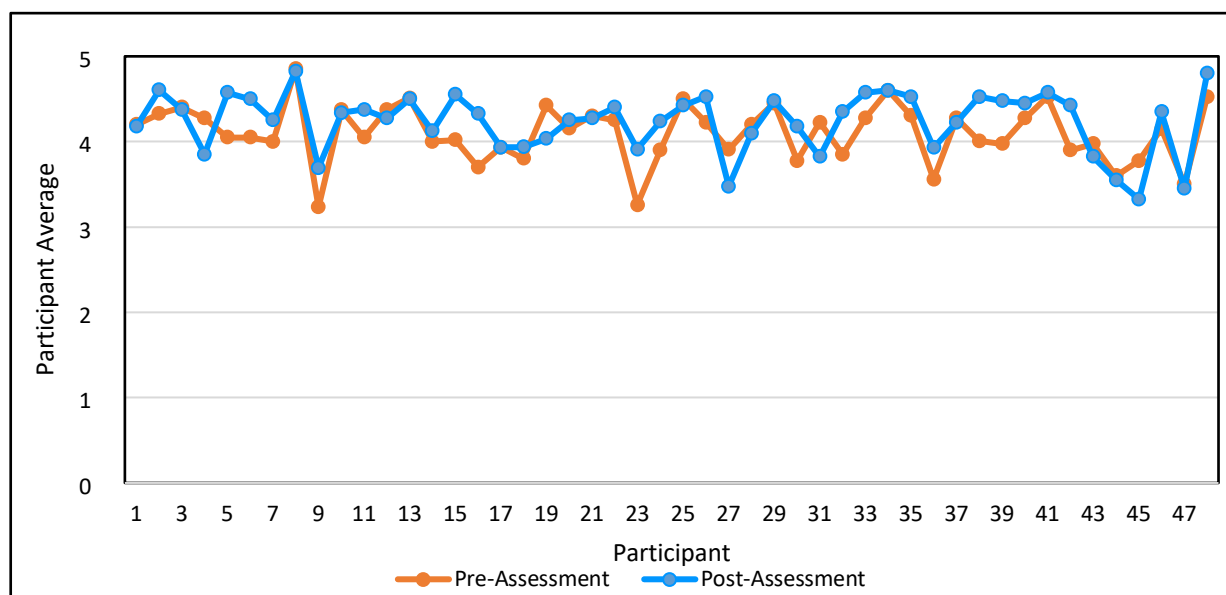


Figure 3. Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Average Scores.

## Data Analysis

The researcher first analyzed the pre-assessment and post-assessment by comparing the average scores of each participant on the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment*. Further analysis included a *t*-test in order to determine the significance of the growth in preadolescent girls' confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset through the understanding and awareness of the five targeted aspects of leadership, which include growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty, and strengths from the onset to the conclusion of the five-week intervention. The results were analyzed using the average scores from the pre-intervention assessment and post-intervention assessment using a paired-sample *t*-test with an alpha level set at 0.01.

### **Analysis of the empowering preadolescent girls pre-assessment and post-assessment.**

The average scores of the pre-intervention and post-intervention *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* were further analyzed using a paired-sample *t*-test with an alpha level set at 0.01 to measure the statistical significance between the average scores of each participant before and after the intervention. The analysis revealed a significant difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment scores:  $t(N) = 48$ ;  $t\text{-Critical} = 2.68$ ;  $t\text{-Stat} = 3.21$ ;  $p = 0.002$ . The mean of the pre-assessment was 4.10 and the mean of the post-assessment was 4.23. When the means were statistically compared, the researcher found that the  $t\text{-Stat}$  score was higher than the  $t\text{-Critical}$  score and the  $p$ -value was less than the alpha level set at 0.01. This concludes that the results show a statistical difference and indicates that the increase was significant. This means that if the researcher repeated this study with this same group of students 100 times, similar results would be expected 99 times. Table 4 represents the results of the paired-sample *t*-test.

Table 4

*Results of Paired-sample t-test for Participant Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Scores*

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment				
N	Mean	N	Mean	<i>t</i> -Critical	<i>t</i> -Stat	<i>p</i>
48	4.10	48	4.23	2.68	3.21	0.002412822

\*Note: The maximum score possible is 5

$p < 0.01$

### **Subgroups.**

The researcher analyzed the pre-assessment and post-assessment averages of participants as part of a subgroup, according to their grade-level, to examine the effects of the program on fifth and sixth-grades individually. Fifth-grade students participated in the spring of 2019, and sixth-grade students participated in the fall of 2018.

***Fifth-grade participants.*** The researcher analyzed the average scores of the fifth-grade participants in this study. The researcher first analyzed the pre-assessment and post-assessment averages of each fifth-grade participant on the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment*. Of the twenty-eight participants, sixteen students, or approximately 57% of the fifth-grade participants, increased their average scores from pre-assessment to post-assessment. The average pre-assessment value and post-assessment value of each fifth-grade participant is illustrated in Figure 4.

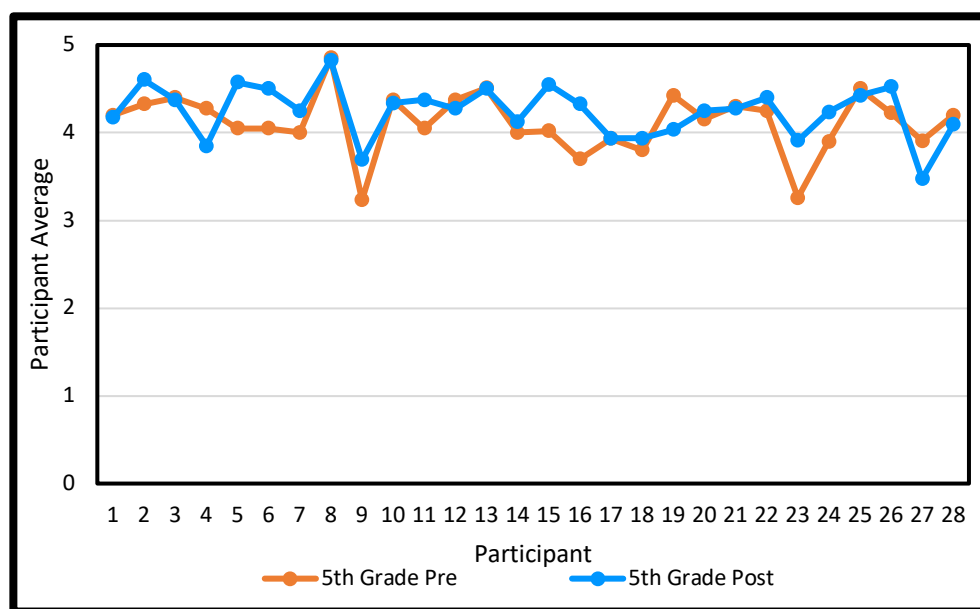


Figure 4. Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Average Scores for Fifth-grade Participants.

The average scores of the pre-assessment and post-assessment were analyzed using a paired-sample  $t$ -test with an alpha level set at 0.01 to measure the statistical significance between the average scores of sixth-grade participants before and after the intervention. The analysis did not show a statistically significant difference. The researcher then analyzed the average scores using a paired-sample  $t$ -test with an alpha level set at 0.05. The analysis revealed a significant

difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment scores:  $t(n) = 28$ ;  $t\text{-Critical} = 2.05$ ;  $t\text{-Stat} = 2.27$ ;  $p = 0.03$ . The mean of the pre-assessment was 4.12 and the mean of the post-assessment was 4.24. When the means were statistically compared, the researcher found that the  $t\text{-Stat}$  score was higher than the  $t\text{-Critical}$  score and the  $p$ -value was less than the alpha level set at 0.05. This concludes that the results show a statistical difference and indicates that the increase was significant. This means that if the researcher repeated this study with this same group of students 100 times, similar results would be expected 95 times. Table 5 represents the results of the paired-sample  $t$ -test.

Table 5

*Results of Paired-sample t-test for Fifth-grade Participant Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Scores*

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment				
n	Mean	n	Mean	$t\text{-Critical}$	$t\text{-Stat}$	$p$
28	4.12	28	4.24	2.05	2.27	0.03169634

\*Note: The maximum score possible is 5

$p < 0.05$

***Sixth-grade participants.*** The researcher also analyzed the average scores of the sixth-grade participants on the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment*. The researcher first analyzed the pre-assessment and post-assessment averages of each sixth-grade participant. Of the twenty participants, thirteen students, or approximately 65% of the sixth-grade participants, increased their average scores from pre-assessment to post-assessment. The average pre-assessment value and post-assessment value of each participant is illustrated in Figure 5.

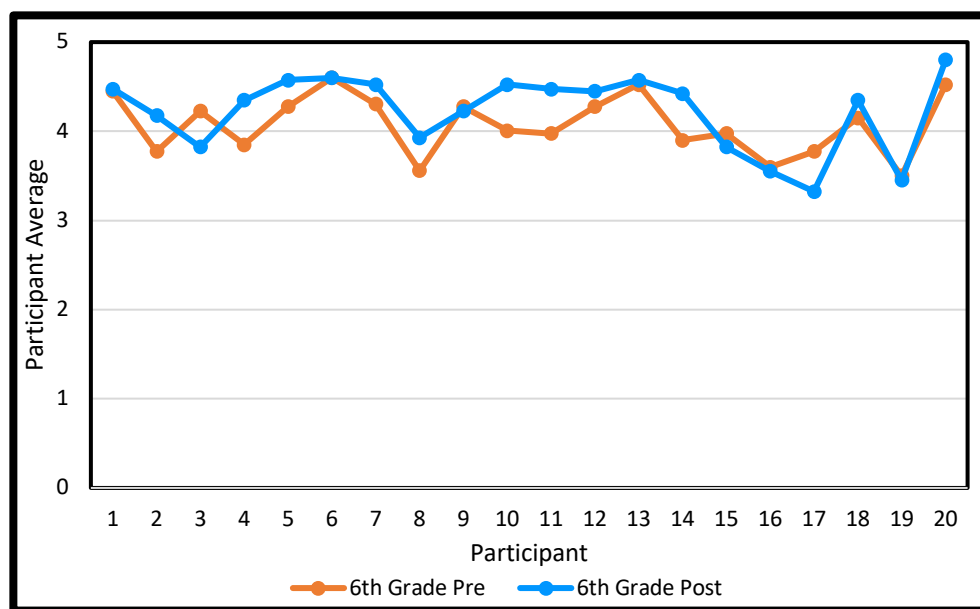


Figure 5. Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Average Scores for Sixth-grade Participants.

The average scores of the pre-assessment and post-assessment were analyzed using a paired-sample *t*-test with an alpha level set at 0.01 to measure the statistical significance between the average scores of sixth-grade participants before and after the intervention. The analysis did not show a statistically significant difference. The researcher then analyzed the average scores using a paired-sample *t*-test with an alpha level set at 0.05. The analysis revealed a significant difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment scores:  $t(n) = 20$ ;  $t\text{-Critical} = 2.09$ ;  $t\text{-Stat} = 2.24$ ;  $p = 0.04$ . The mean of the pre-assessment was 4.08 and the mean of the post-assessment was 4.22. When the means were statistically compared, the researcher found that the *t*-Stat score was higher than the *t*-Critical score and the *p*-value was less than the alpha level set at 0.05. This concludes that the results show a statistical difference and indicates that the increase was significant. This means that if the researcher repeated this study with this same group of students 100 times, similar results would be expected 95 times. Table 6 represents the results of the paired-sample *t*-test.

Table 6

*Results of Paired-sample t-test for Sixth-grade Participant Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Scores*

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment				
n	Mean	n	Mean	<i>t</i> -Critical	<i>t</i> -Stat	<i>p</i>
20	4.08	20	4.22	2.09	2.24	0.03702575

\*Note: The maximum score possible is 5

$p < 0.05$

**Analysis of the targeted aspects of leadership addressed in weekly lessons.** The researcher further analyzed the pre-assessment and post-assessment by categorizing it into sections that aligned with the five aspects of leadership that were targeted in each of the weekly meetings. The statements within each category were measured by comparing the pre-assessment average to the post-assessment average of the section within the assessment instrument, *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment*. The average of each of the five aspects increased over the course of the five-week intervention. Table 7 represents the pre-assessment and post-assessment averages of each of the five targeted aspects of leadership with an additional section of statements relating to literacy and mentoring. The responses from the weekly formative assessments and anecdotal records also support participants' growth in their awareness and understanding of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset.

Table 7

*Average Scores of the Five Leadership Aspects Targeted*

Leadership Aspect	Participant Pre-assessment Average	Participant Post-assessment Average
<b>G</b> – Growth Mindset	4.39	4.59
<b>I</b> – Integrity	4.33	4.46

<b>R – Resilience</b>	3.98	4.08
<b>L – Love &amp; Loyalty</b>	3.66	3.76
<b>S – Strengths</b>	4.30	4.41
Literacy/Mentoring	3.82	4.00

**Growth mindset.** When analyzing the scores of the pre-assessment and post-assessment statements categorized as the leadership aspect growth mindset (*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment #1-6*), which was targeted in Week One, there was an increase in the overall average of this leadership aspect. The average of growth mindset for the pre-assessment was 4.39 and the average for the post-assessment was 4.59.

**Integrity.** The average scores of the statements categorized as integrity (*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment #7-13*) increased over the course of this study. The average of this aspect increased from 4.33 on the pre-assessment to 4.46 on the post-assessment.

**Resilience.** The pre-assessment and post-assessment average for the test items categorized as resilience (*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment #14-18*) showed improvement. The average of scores improved from 3.98 on the pre-assessment to an average of 4.08 on the post-assessment in this aspect.

**Love and loyalty.** In the aspect of love and loyalty, participants' average scores increased between the pre-assessment and post-assessment. The average score of the pre-assessment was 3.66 and the average score of the post-assessment was 3.76 for the test items targeting this aspect (*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment #19-24*).

**Strengths.** Participants' average also increased in the assessment items targeting strengths (*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment #25-32*) from before and after the



intervention. The average score increased from 4.30 on the pre-assessment to an average score of 4.41 on the post-assessment.

**Literacy and mentoring.** The average score of the pre-assessment and post-assessment statements targeting literacy and mentoring (*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* #33-40) showed improvement over the course of this study. The average score on the pre-assessment was 3.82 and the average score on the post-assessment was 4.00.

**Monitored areas of the study.** The researcher clustered the pre-assessment and post-assessment statements into categories according to the three areas monitored during the study, confidence, self-concept, and leadership, for further analysis of growth in this intervention. The statements categorized within each of these areas were analyzed by comparing the pre-assessment average to the post-assessment average of the category. The average of each of the three monitored areas, confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset, increased over the course of the study. Overall average scores are displayed in Figure 6 for the three areas monitored during the study. Appendix M represents the assessment statements clustered by category according to the three areas monitored in the study.

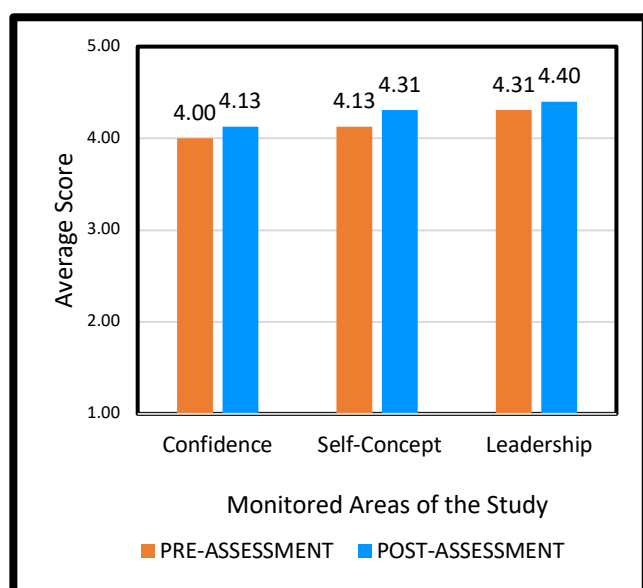


Figure 6. Average Scores of Categories Monitored in the Study

The researcher further analyzed the three categories of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset monitored during the study using a paired-sample  $t$ -test with an alpha level set at 0.01 to measure the statistical significance between the average scores of the statements within the categories of confidence, self-concept, and leadership before and after the intervention. The analysis revealed a significant difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment scores for confidence and self-concept. The  $t$ -test for confidence showed  $t$ -Critical = 2.86;  $t$ -Stat = 3.97;  $p < .001$ . The mean of the pre-assessment was 4.00 and the mean of the post-assessment was 4.13. The  $t$ -test for self-concept showed  $t$ -Critical = 3.05;  $t$ -Stat = 3.22;  $p = 0.007377283$ . The mean of the pre-assessment was 4.13 and the mean of the post-assessment was 4.31. When the means were statistically compared, the researcher found that the  $t$ -Stat score was higher than the  $t$ -Critical score and the  $p$ -value was less than the alpha level set at 0.01. This concludes that the results show a statistical difference and indicates that the increase was significant. This means that if the researcher repeated this study with this same group of students 100 times, similar results would be expected 99 times. The  $t$ -test did not reveal that the data was significant for leadership skillset, but participants showed growth by improvement of average scores on the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* in leadership skillset, an area that the study monitors. The  $t$ -test results for the areas monitored in the study, confidence, self-concept, and leadership are shown in Tables 8 – 10.

Table 8

*Results of Paired-sample t-test for Confidence*

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment				
n	Mean	n	Mean	$t$ -Critical	$t$ -Stat	$p$
20	4.00	20	4.13	2.86	3.97	$p < .001$

\*Note: The maximum score possible is 5

$p < 0.01$

Table 9

*Results of Paired-sample t-test for Self-Concept*

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment				
n	Mean	n	Mean	t-Critical	t-Stat	p
13	4.13	13	4.31	3.05	3.22	0.007377283

\*Note: The maximum score possible is 5

 $p < 0.01$ 

Table 10

*Results of Paired-sample t-test for Leadership Skillset*

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment				
n	Mean	n	Mean	t-Critical	t-Stat	p
7	4.31	7	4.40	3.71	0.95	0.378197312

\*Note: The maximum score possible is 5

 $p < 0.01$ 

**Parent and/or guardian pre-intervention and post-intervention survey.** Parents and/or guardians were asked to complete a survey before and after the intervention measuring parents' perception of their child's leadership qualities. There were 27 parents who completed a pre-survey and post-survey. On the pre-survey, two parents omitted a statement. For purposes of validity, the researcher averaged the scores for the assessment item from all parents who completed the item and used the value for the parent(s) who omitted the answer on that assessment item.

In order for the test items to be valid, the researcher reverse scored statement #11 on the Parent and/or Guardian Survey. This statement was negatively worded, which means that the researcher would want to see the score for responses to this statement decrease. It is anticipated that after the course of this study, the score for this statement would decrease. The researcher reverse coded this statement for data analysis. In order to reverse code, the researcher ran the numerical scoring scale (1-5) in the opposite direction. A value of five therefore expresses

“strongly disagree” and a value of one expresses “strongly agree.” The statements were reverse coded before finding the averages.

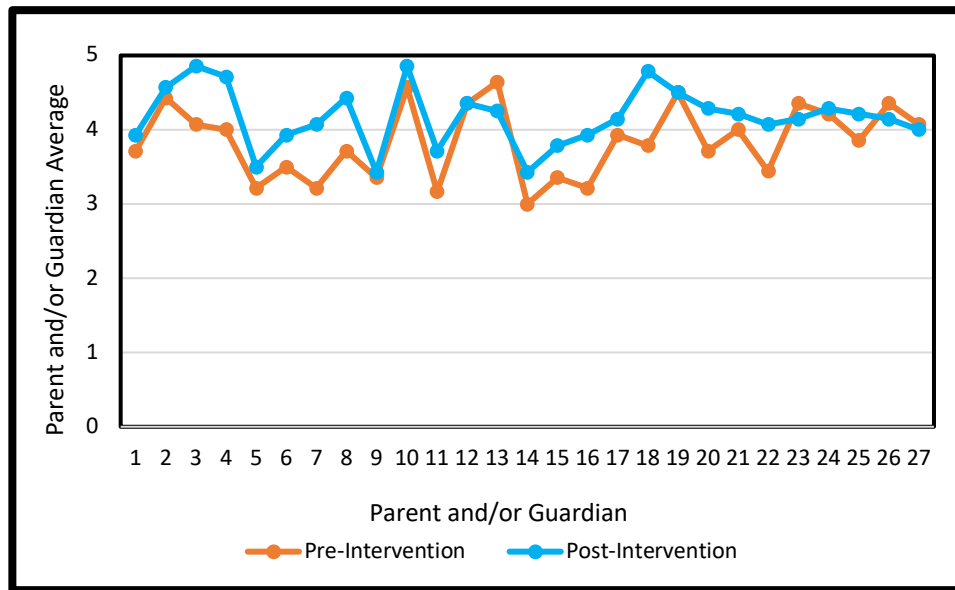


Figure 7. Parent and/or Guardian Pre-intervention and post-intervention Survey Average Scores

The researcher first analyzed the pre-assessment and post-assessment averages of each parent's responses. Twenty-two parents, or 81% of the parent responses, increased their scores from pre-assessment to post-assessment, three decreased, and the average of two parents' scores stayed the same. The average pre-intervention value and post-intervention value of each parent is illustrated in Figure 7. See Appendix N for the Parent and/or Guardian Survey pre-intervention and post-intervention scores.

The pre-assessment and post-assessment average scores were further analyzed using a paired-sample *t*-test with an alpha level set at 0.01 to measure the statistical significance between the average scores of each parent before and after the intervention. The analysis revealed a significant difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment scores:  $t(N) = 27$ ;  $t$ -

Critical = 2.78;  $t$ -Stat = 4.74;  $p < .001$ . The mean of the pre-assessment was 3.84 and the mean of the post-assessment was 4.17. When the means were statistically compared, the researcher found that the  $t$ -Stat score was higher than the  $t$ -Critical score and the  $p$ -value was smaller than the alpha level. This indicates that the results show a statistical difference and indicates that the increase was significant. This means that if the researcher repeated this study with this group of parents 100 times, similar results would be expected 99 times. Table 11 represents the results of the paired-sample  $t$ -test.

Table 11

*Results of Paired-sample  $t$ -test for Parent and/or Guardian Pre-intervention and Post-intervention Average Scores*

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment				
N	Mean	N	Mean	$t$ -Critical	$t$ -Stat	$p$
27	3.84	27	4.17	2.78	4.74	$p < .001$

\*Note: The maximum score possible is 5

$p < 0.01$

**Small group mentor leader post-intervention evaluations.** The responses from the small group mentor leaders show that this program had a positive impact on the small group mentor leaders. From analysis of the anecdotal notes, the mentors revealed that they learned more about themselves from the weekly themes that targeted aspects of leadership and from the lessons within the curriculum. Mentors affirmed that the relationships they formed with the participants in their small group had a positive effect on them. The mentor leaders noticed several changes in their small groups over the course of the intervention. By the final week of the program, the participants were more confident, inclusive, and willing to share their personal thoughts and ideas with one another. The mentor leaders also noted that they learned more about the developmental needs (cognitive, physical, and social-emotional) of preadolescent girls.

Several commented that the participants are in a vulnerable stage of development and need programs such as **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise** to help improve their confidence and self-concept during this stage of “storm and stress”. They will need to continue positive development in the areas monitored in the study (confidence, self-concept, and leadership skills) as they further develop during the adolescent years and as women leaders for the future. Table 12 displays the results of the small group mentor leaders’ responses to the Likert scale statements on the evaluation.

Table 12

*Small Group Mentor Leader Responses to Evaluation Statements.*

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
My small group understood that their brains can grow and develop by moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
My small group’s confidence in their abilities to achieve things and set goals for themselves improved.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
My small group learned the importance of taking responsibility for your own actions and being respectful of others.	0%	0%	8.3%	25%	66.7%
My small group was able to understand that how you treat others can affect how you feel.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
My small group developed resilience and learned ways	0%	0%	0%	33.3%	66.7%

to face challenges and obstacles with a positive attitude.					
My small group developed strategies to take care of themselves.	0%	0%	8.3%	16.7%	75%
My small group improved in appreciating who they are and what they believe in.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
My small group learned how to develop their strengths and improved in their views of themselves as leaders.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

### Summary

This chapter presented analyses of all data collected during this study for the purposes of determining the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on the development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset with a group of preadolescent girls. The results included an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data in this mixed methods design. The researcher compared pre-assessment and post-assessment results of the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* and found a statistically significant increase in the average scores of participants. Common trends and patterns from weekly formative assessments, as well as anecdotal records from the researcher and small group mentor leaders, were presented to support the findings of this study. Chapter V will provide a discussion of the results including conclusions of the study, the limitations that may have influenced the results, the implications, and recommendations of the study for future implementation and research.

## Chapter V

### Discussion

#### Overview of Findings

The purpose of this study is to promote positive, empowering skills and tools to develop confidence, self-concept, and a leadership skillset in preadolescent girls through participation in the literacy-based mentoring program, **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***. The goal of the program is to foster and improve participants' understanding of the targeted aspects of leadership that were themes of weekly lessons in the program: growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty to self, and awareness of personal strengths, with the outcome of demonstrated application of this skillset in their school, home, and community. The research question presented is "What are the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls' development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset?" The findings of this study indicate that participants improved in their awareness and understanding of the areas monitored in the study: confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset. This chapter is divided into four sections to discuss the results of this study. The conclusions of the study, the limitations that may have influenced the results, the implications, and recommendations of the study for future implementation and research are presented in this chapter.

#### Conclusions

According to the results of the study, participants of **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise*** improved in their development of their confidence, self-concept and leadership skillset. The comparison of participants' pre-assessment and post-assessment scores reflect a development in the understanding of a personal leadership skillset and demonstrated application of the targeted leadership aspects, growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty to self, and personal



strengths, within the parameters of the program. Based on the weekly formative assessment results, participants also showed positive growth each week in these five aspects of leadership, which support the improvement of results from the pre-assessment and post-assessment average scores of the five targeted leadership aspects. The growth shown from the increased pre-assessment and post-assessment scores and from weekly formative assessments reflect the participants' development of confidence, positive of self-concept, and increased awareness of personal leadership skills. The researcher concluded that empowering preadolescent girls to have a growth mindset, take responsibility for their actions, turn failures into learning opportunities, and cultivate a love for self, increases their perception of self and leadership development.

**Targeted aspects of leadership.** Using the results from the pre-assessment and post-assessment, weekly formative assessments, and anecdotal records, conclusions can be made about the essential research questions for each of the five targeted aspects of leadership.

**Growth mindset.** The essential research questions for Week One include, *Will understanding that the brain is malleable and can grow and change by moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset increase confidence, self-concept, and leadership potential?* and *What are the effects of this program on preadolescent girls' confidence in their abilities to set and achieve goals for themselves?*

The results indicate that participants learned the meaning of plasticity, and by understanding that their brains can grow, participants showed growth in their assessment scores. The average score of the statements categorized as the targeted aspect of leadership, growth mindset, increased between the pre-assessment and post-assessment. Participant responses on the growth mindset formative assessment reflect an understanding of the aspect and how they

can apply it to their personal lives. Because the average of all individual statements categorized as the leadership aspect of growth mindset increased between the pre-assessment and post-assessment, the overall average increased, and it is evident that the growth mindset lesson and learning activities of Week One helped participants increase in their confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset. This supports the idea that when preadolescent girls understand that their brains are malleable, are still developing and can grow, their self-confidence increases (Glangchai, 2018b). This, in turn, improves their self-awareness, a social and emotional learning competency which includes the ability to assess one's self with a growth mindset. Participants improved their skill of understanding and using a growth mindset within the parameters of the program, which had a positive effect on preadolescent girls' confidence in their abilities to set and achieve goals. Setting and achieving goals leads to adolescents setting more challenging goals (Schunk, 1990), therefore increasing the social and emotional learning competency of self-management. Because statements 3 and 6 specifically address goal-setting, and the average of both statements increased over the course of the study, the researcher infers that the program had a positive effect on preadolescent girls' confidence in their abilities to set and achieve goals for themselves.

***Integrity.*** The essential research question for Week Two was *Will the program, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**, improve preadolescent girls' understanding of the importance of taking responsibility for their own actions, being respectful of others, and acting in ways consistent with their values?*

According to the results of this study, participants improved in their understanding of integrity and knowledge of the five fundamental values – respect, responsibility, fairness, trustworthiness, and honesty. Participants associated integrity with doing the right thing and

showing kindness, according to their weekly formative assessment for integrity. Because there was an increase in the overall average of the pre-assessment and post-assessment section classified as integrity, the researcher infers that the lesson and learning activities related to integrity in this program had a positive effect on preadolescent girls' understanding of taking responsibility for your own actions, being respectful of others, and acting in ways consistent with their values. As a result of teaching students about character education, which encompasses integrity, preadolescents learn to respect one another and develop a sense of compassion and responsibility for their own actions (Brannon, 2008). Character education helps preadolescent girls cultivate positive relationships and discover their personal values and beliefs, which aligns with the social and emotional learning competency, self-awareness.

***Resilience.*** Week Three's essential research question was *Will teaching preadolescent girls about resilience increase their confidence and self-concept to make good choices when facing challenges?*

Based on participants' responses throughout this study on the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* and weekly formative assessments, the researcher can infer that participants increased their understanding of resilience, which can lead to improvement of confidence and self-concept in making good choices when facing challenges. Participants gained knowledge that being resilient means to "bounce back" and connects to growth mindset. Glanchai discusses in her book *VentureGirls* that when girls view failures and mistakes as part of the learning process, they develop a growth mindset and feel empowered (Glanchai, 2018b). All statements categorized as resilient increased in average scores from the pre-assessment to post-assessment. Therefore, it can be inferred that the lessons and learning activities helped improve participants' confidence in learning to work through challenges and using them as opportunities to grow.

Resilience is especially important to teach girls in this developmental stage, as this is when they begin to lack confidence and depression rates increase (Jordan, 2006). Teaching girls how to cope with failure not only increases their confidence, which is a component of the social and emotional competency, self-awareness, but it also plays a role in their cognitive and social-emotional development, which is often linked to self-concept (Archard, 2012).

***Love and loyalty.*** The targeted aspect of love and loyalty focused on the essential research question, *Will GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise encourage preadolescent girls to appreciate and love who they are, take care of themselves, and stay loyal and true to their personal goals and values?*

Participants' responses show an increase in the average score of the section of statements classified as *love and loyalty* from the pre-assessment to post-assessment, as well as an increase in their understanding of this aspect according to responses on the formative assessments. The researcher can infer that the participants of the program were encouraged to appreciate who they are as an individual, practice self-love by taking care of themselves, and stay loyal and true to their personal goals and values. Based on trends and patterns that emerged from the formative assessments, participants developed an understanding of the importance of leaders taking care of themselves and remaining loyal in order to set an example for others. Girls increasingly compare themselves to others as they enter adolescence, which leads to a decrease in confidence and self-concept. Teaching preadolescent girls to value who they are will enable them to take care of themselves, or "sharpen the saw" (Covey, 2008).

***Strengths.*** The targeted aspect of leadership for Week Five, personal strengths, focused on the essential research question, *What are the effects of GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise on*

*preadolescent girls' perceptions of their own personal strengths and how these strengths can be developed through the lens of leadership skillset?*

Because the statements in the section of personal strengths on the *Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* increased from pre-intervention to post-intervention and participant responses on the weekly formative assessments reflect an improved understanding of the aspect of strengths, the researcher can infer that the program had a positive effect on the participants' perceptions of their own personal strengths. Participants showed gains of a greater awareness of their personal strengths and understanding of how to further develop their strengths. Their responses reveal they recognize that leaders have different strengths and that a leader can become stronger by using their strengths to work with others. Archard's (2012) study showed that while girls lack confidence in their leadership ability, they also believe that confidence is an important prerequisite to leadership. When preadolescent girls are able to recognize and assess their own strengths, their definition of leadership broadens and they are able to visualize themselves as leaders (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008).

### **Limitations**

Several factors of the design and methodology influenced the results of this study. Both positive and negative limitations are found and explained below.

**Positive limitations.** Positive limitations are the factors that have positive effects on the results of this study. The limitations that had a positive impact on the results of this study include: a consistent researcher, the natural school setting of the intervention, and the focus on one grade level per intervention each semester, as well as the improvements that result from the experience of repeatedly teaching the curriculum.

***Consistent researcher.*** The researcher was constant throughout both implementations of **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**. The curriculum and lesson activities were designed by the researcher who facilitated each program meeting during the fall and spring interventions.

***Setting of the intervention.*** The interventions occurred in the same setting during the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semester. The home school for the participants served as the location for each of the weekly meetings of the program. The study was conducted in the same setting for both the fifth and sixth grade participants. It provided a familiar environment and consistent routine for participants throughout the duration of the program.

***Program specific grade level focus.*** The study focused on only one grade level during both implementations of the program. The students who participated in the fall were in the sixth grade, and the spring semester participants were in the fifth grade. The researcher was able to adapt the curriculum to meet the developmental needs of both sets of students by targeting one particular grade level for each session.

***Greater effectiveness with experience.*** The study occurred over a span of two semesters in the academic school year and the same curriculum was used. This gave the researcher experience and familiarity working in the school setting with preadolescent girls, teaching the same curriculum, and facilitating the learning activities during the calendar year. The researcher was able to make modifications to the presentation of the material in regard to terminology, context, and relevancy to better meet the needs of the participants and further develop and extend their understanding. The researcher had greater experience and knowledge about the school and developmental needs of preadolescent girls the second time the program was implemented during the school year. This resulted in greater effectiveness based on the researcher's

understanding of the developmental domains of preadolescents, familiarity in implementing the curriculum, and comfort as the teacher in this setting with preadolescent participants.

***Consistency of small group mentor leaders.*** Five collegiate women who served as small group mentor leaders in the fall returned as mentors for the second implementation of the program. The five mentors had greater experience, familiarity, and knowledge of working in this school setting with preadolescent girls and facilitating and mentoring the collaborative small groups. Therefore, this resulted in greater effectiveness during small groups as the five returning mentors served as the main small group mentor leader during the spring semester.

***Publicity of program.*** The publicity of the program, ***GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise***, by word of mouth and social media, from sixth-grade participants and their parents at the school may have impacted the increased application response for the second semester of the program. Promotion of the program in spring 2019, after the initial program establishment from the previous semester, may have had a positive effect on application process and number of participants that enrolled for the program.

***Motivation from literacy-based curriculum.*** Using a literacy-based curriculum provided opportunities for participants to make connections with characters and the stories within books. Participants were motivated to identify leadership qualities of the characters within themselves, which could have led to increased engagement. Engaging students through relevant curriculum and coherent learning experiences actively involves them in the learning process and increases motivation (Jensen, 2005). The participants were able to connect the literacy-based and social-emotional learning curriculum of the program to topics and discussions from their English Language Arts class at school and character education lessons in their advisory period.

**Negative Limitations.** Negative limitations are the factors that negatively influence the results. The negative limitations for this study include the researcher-created pre-assessment and post-assessment instrument, time of day the intervention occurred, the setting of the intervention, attendance of participants, and the curriculum which was designed by the researcher, who is a teacher candidate.

**Assessments.** Though the pre-assessment and post-assessment were modified from previously used assessment tools that were valid and reliable, the researcher compiled statements from the various published instruments into one assessment for this study. The majority of the statements were positively stated, meaning a higher score represented growth. However, five of the statements were negatively stated. This means that in order to see growth, it is desired that participants score lower on the scale. Because the statements were originally from various assessment tools, the complexity of the assessment instrument may have varied and therefore, participants may have comprehended some assessment items better than others. The findings of this study were also based on self-reports; therefore, they are subject to potential bias based on the responses of the participants.

**Time of day.** The intervention occurred on a normal school day during the week immediately after school. This factor presents a negative limitation because it may have affected participant attendance, motivation, and performance. Due to prior obligations or extracurricular activities, several participants had to leave early or were absent on multiple occasions. Participants completed the weekly formative assessments at the end of each meeting program, at approximately 6:00 p.m., which could have had an effect on their responses. Fatigue is a consideration of the preadolescent participants during the late afternoon/evening time period for the intervention program.



***Setting of the intervention.*** The setting of the intervention also served as a negative limitation. The large room setting served as the Fitness Corral, a fitness center for the school on inclement weather days. It contained materials and new fitness equipment that was often a distraction to participants, causing the researcher and mentor leaders to use redirective strategies to gain the attention of participants prior to and during the learning activities. The researcher was also not on site at the school setting every day. This made it difficult to determine the effect of the setting on the participants due to familiarity and previous use of the fitness equipment. The limited access also inhibited the researcher from reminding participants weekly or biweekly to return their Information Sheets, which was often left to the responsibility of the school counselor and classroom teacher who may not have had ownership or buy-in of the program.

***Participant attendance.*** There are multiple factors that contributed to participant attendance during both semesters of the intervention. As previously mentioned, the time of day the program was implemented may have been a limitation because of prior after school obligations. Several participants also became ill during one or more weeks of the program, particularly in the spring semester during flu season. During Week Three of the fifth-grade program, eight participants were absent with the flu. The promotion of the program could have also affected the number and attendance of participants. The researcher did not have promotional materials to show for advertisement and motivational purposes to the sixth-grade students at the school. However, the researcher created a video of photos and videos taken during the sixth-grade program in the fall semester to provide an overview of the activities completed throughout the program as a motivational promotion for spring semester participants. The video was originally created to show parents of participants at the conclusion of the program on Week Five. The researcher was able to present this video to fifth-grade students in the spring

semester, which encouraged participation. When introducing the program in the spring, students and parents from the school were familiar with the program because they had seen or heard about it from the participants in the previous semester. This had a positive impact on the recruitment of participants for the spring semester. There was an increase in the number of participants in the 2019 spring semester from the initial implementation of the program in the 2018 fall semester.

***Curriculum.*** There are learning activities, vocabulary, and concepts within the curriculum that could have been more challenging for the participants. The program was originally designed to accommodate all middle schools in the Fayetteville Public School District. Demographics vary widely across the three middle schools, which would have created a diverse pool of participants with varied background experiences.

***Inexperience of small group mentor leaders.*** There were four new small group mentor leaders during the program in the spring semester. This is a negative limitation because the new mentors did not have the experience of the five returning mentors who were familiar with program curriculum and the school setting. For the new four mentors, the second semester was their first time working with the program curriculum and working in the school setting. Therefore, they assisted the returning leaders and served as co-leaders.

## **Implications**

Several implications can be made about the positive effects of the literacy-based mentoring program, **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**, and the impact this intervention may have had on the areas monitored within the study on preadolescent girls' development of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset.

**Mentoring relationships.** The results of this study align with Liang and Spencer's (2009) findings that mentoring relationships can support the development of adolescent girls' healthier sense of self and confidence. Participants of this program were mentored by successful college students, which supports the research of Radcliffe and Stephens (2008), for improving confidence and developing positive self-concept and a leadership skillset in preadolescent girls.

**Training for mentor leaders.** The small group mentor leaders were trained each week prior to the weekly program meetings by the researcher, who is a teacher candidate in a K-6 Teacher Preparation Program. The researcher presented the curriculum to mentor leaders and prepared them for discussion topics and learning activities. The researcher was also able to review curriculum goals along with strategies and procedures for facilitating small group, mentor-led instruction.

**Literacy-based curriculum.** The successful implementation of the program's curriculum indicates the positive impact that literacy can have on preadolescent girls' self-awareness and leadership development. The curriculum designed for this study provided opportunities for participants to identify and empathize with characters in order to promote social identity and self-expression, which is supported by research from Cummings, Finch, and McLaughlin (2018).

**Gender specific programming.** The program was an all-female intervention, allowing participants to feel comfortable and safe to experience risks while exploring the leadership aspects targeted in the intervention. The pre-assessment results revealed that the participants scored an average above four prior to entering the program, which is a fairly high starting point. Regardless, the overall results showed statistically significant improvement. Therefore, it can be

inferred that preadolescent girls can benefit from this type of mentoring program despite factors such as background, experience, or socioeconomic status.

**Social and emotional competencies.** This study indicates that integrating social and emotional competencies into a curriculum can benefit students in their development of confidence, higher sense of self-concept, and leadership skillset. The five targeted aspects of leadership addressed in this study align with the five social and emotional learning competencies. Results of this study reveal participants' increased awareness and development of a leadership skillset through the targeted aspects. It can be inferred that participants of this program developed a greater understanding of aligning social and emotional learning with leadership development.

**Safe environment.** The information gained from the results of this study provide useful information for teachers and future educators to use in creating an environment where all students feel confident in their abilities, are able to discover their strengths, and understand how to effectively use these strengths as positive leaders. The environment of this program may have positive implications for all students in a middle level setting, not just preadolescent girls to feel confident in their abilities, discover their strengths, and develop as leaders.

### **Recommendations**

The limitations discussed provide opportunities to make suggestions for further research. More data are needed to examine the long-lasting effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls' confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset. The findings of this study indicate that there was a positive effect on participants' understanding and development of confidence, self-concept, and leadership skillset and demonstrated application of skills within the

parameters of the program, but further research is needed to measure the application of leadership skills at the conclusion of the program.

Participants of the program fed into the middle school from multiple elementary schools, so not all of the participants established friendships before the intervention. The middle school is structured so that each grade level is divided into pods with three to four teachers per pod, each teaching a departmentalized content area within that pod and grade level. Participants from the same homeroom classes and same pods might have been familiar with each other but not always with those in the other grade level pods. It is recommended that intentional grouping of participants could help students develop relationships outside of their assigned pod.

Due to the time of day the program was implemented and participant fatigue by the end of each meeting, it is recommended that the weekly formative assessments be administered at the end of small group sessions before returning to the large group setting. This could allow for greater engagement and motivation for completing the self-reflections before transitioning back to the whole group setting.

The pre-assessment and post-assessment could be reformatted so that all statements are positively worded and do not have to be reverse scored before analyzing. The statements should also be reworded to reflect a “student-friendly” language, or “I Can” statements that reflect the common language of the school environment and social and emotional learning programs used within the school district. This recommendation could provide increased comprehension of the assessment items and allow students of various developmental and readiness levels to have a greater understanding of the statements. “I Can” statements can empower students to focus on what they “can” do and help promote agency.

## Summary

This chapter provided an analysis of data collected from the results of the study designed to address the research question, “What are the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls’ development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset?” It discussed conclusions drawn from the results of the pre-assessment and post-assessment, weekly formative assessments, and anecdotal records. The positive and negative limitations that may have impacted the effectiveness of the literacy-based mentoring program were provided, as well as implications and recommendations of the study for future implementation and research.

This study was designed and conducted to measure the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on preadolescent girls’ development of confidence, positive self-concept, and leadership skillset by targeting the aspects of growth mindset, integrity, resilience, love and loyalty to self, and awareness of personal strengths. Overall, the data suggested that the literacy-based mentoring program designed for this study, **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***, had a positive impact on participants’ development of confidence, improvement of self-concept, and awareness of a personal leadership skillset.

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Appendix A1  
Institutional Review Board Approval – Fall 2018



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**To:** Sophia M. Vincent  
**From:** Douglas James Adams, Chair  
IRB Committee  
**Date:** 09/10/2018  
**Action:** **Expedited Approval**  
**Action Date:** 09/10/2018  
**Protocol #:** 1807132466  
**Study Title:** The Effects of a Literacy-Based Mentoring Program on Empowering Young Adolescent Girls to Improve Their Self-Concept, Confidence, and Leadership Development  
**Expiration Date:** 08/23/2019  
**Last Approval Date:**

The above-referenced protocol has been approved following expedited review by the IRB Committee that oversees research with human subjects.

If the research involves collaboration with another institution then the research cannot commence until the Committee receives written notification of approval from the collaborating institution's IRB.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without Committee approval. Please submit continuation requests early enough to allow sufficient time for review. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the automatic suspension of the approval of this protocol. Information collected following suspension is unapproved research and cannot be reported or published as research data. If you do not wish continued approval, please notify the Committee of the study closure.

Adverse Events: Any serious or unexpected adverse event must be reported to the IRB Committee within 48 hours. All other adverse events should be reported within 10 working days.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, study personnel, or number of participants, please submit an amendment to the IRB. All changes must be approved by the IRB Committee before they can be initiated.

You must maintain a research file for at least 3 years after completion of the study. This file should include all correspondence with the IRB Committee, original signed consent forms, and study data.

cc: Angela Elsass, Investigator

Appendix A2  
Institutional Review Board Approval – Spring 2019



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**To:** Sophia M. Vincent  
**From:** Douglas James Adams, Chair  
IRB Committee  
**Date:** 01/07/2019  
**Action:** **Expedited Approval**  
**Action Date:** 01/02/2019  
**Protocol #:** 1807132466A001  
**Study Title:** The Effects of a Literacy-Based Mentoring Program on Empowering Young Adolescent Girls to Improve Their Self-Concept, Confidence, and Leadership Development  
**Expiration Date:** 08/23/2019  
**Last Approval Date:** 01/02/2019

The above-referenced protocol has been approved following expedited review by the IRB Committee that oversees research with human subjects.

If the research involves collaboration with another institution then the research cannot commence until the Committee receives written notification of approval from the collaborating institution's IRB.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without Committee approval. Please submit continuation requests early enough to allow sufficient time for review. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the automatic suspension of the approval of this protocol. Information collected following suspension is unapproved research and cannot be reported or published as research data. If you do not wish continued approval, please notify the Committee of the study closure.

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Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, study personnel, or number of participants, please submit an amendment to the IRB. All changes must be approved by the IRB Committee before they can be initiated.

You must maintain a research file for at least 3 years after completion of the study. This file should include all correspondence with the IRB Committee, original signed consent forms, and study data.

cc: Angela Elsass, Investigator



Appendix B1  
School Approval Letter – Fall 2018

## McNair Middle School



Lisa Davis, Principal  
Ted Whitehead, Assistant Principa

5036 E. Mission Blvd.  
Fayetteville, AR 72703

Phone: 479.527.3660

Fax: 479.527.3667

August 27, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Sophia Vincent, a student at the University of Arkansas working toward a degree in K-6 teacher education and licensure, will be conducting a research project at McNair Middle School. This project is part of her graduation requirement for the College of Education and Health Professions Honors Program. Her project, *GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise*, will be to investigate the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on empowering young adolescent girls to improve their self-concept, leadership skills and develop confidence in their entrepreneurial skillset.

I understand that the purpose of this study is to cultivate a growth mind-set in young adolescent girls, allowing them to become resilient in the face of adversity, and to instill life skills by improving their development as leaders in their schools, communities, and society. *GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise* is a literacy-based curriculum using targeted children's and adolescent books, analyzing characters from stories who are female role-models, and participation in activities related to these books for determining if literacy can be used to inspire preadolescent girls. Each week of the program will cover a different letter of the word "GIRLS" which will serve as the weekly theme. These themes will introduce a positive, empowering skill or tool that the participants will be able to use in their everyday lives and in the future to help them recognize their full potential in becoming leaders in their schools, communities, and society as a whole.

Mentoring and empowering these 6<sup>th</sup> grade females will help them gain confidence and use their skills and tools to become confident leaders. Miss Sophia Vincent has been given permission to conduct this study at McNair Middle School pending approval of the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board. I understand that she is being advised by Dr. Angela Elsass, a faculty member in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction, K-6 Teacher Education Program.

Sincerely,

Lisa Davis, Principal  
McNair Middle School  
Fayetteville Public School District

Appendix B2  
School Approval Letter – Spring 2019

## McNair Middle School



Lisa Davis, Principal  
Ted Whitehead, Assistant Principal  
AR 72703

3030 E. Mission Blvd.  
Fayetteville,

---

Phone: 479.527.3660

Fax: 479.527.3667

November 12, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Sophia Vincent, a student at the University of Arkansas working toward a degree in K-6 teacher education and licensure will be conducting a research project at McNair Middle School. This project is part of her graduation requirement for the College of Education and Health Professions Honors Program. Her project, *GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise*, will be to investigate the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on empowering young adolescent girls to improve their self-concept, leadership skills and develop confidence in their entrepreneurial skill set.

I understand that the purpose of this study is to cultivate a growth mindset in young adolescent girls, allowing them to become resilient in the face of adversity, and to instill life skills by improving their development as leaders in their schools, communities, and society. *GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise* is a literacy-based curriculum using targeted children's and adolescent books, analyzing characters from stories who are female role-models, and participation in activities related to these books for determining if literacy can be used to inspire preadolescent girls. Each week of the program will cover a different letter of the word "GIRLS" which will serve as the weekly theme. These themes will introduce a positive, empowering skill or tool that the participants will be able to use in their everyday lives and in the future to help them recognize their full potential in becoming leaders in their schools, communities, and society as a whole.

Mentoring and empowering these 5<sup>th</sup> grade females will help them gain confidence and use their skills and tools to become confident leaders. Miss Sophia Vincent has my permission to conduct this study at McNair Middle School pending approval of the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board. I understand that she is being advised by Dr. Angela Elsass, a faculty member in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction, K-6 Teacher Education Program.

Sincerely,

Lisa Davis, Principal  
McNair Middle School  
Fayetteville Public School District

Appendix C1  
Participant Application – Parent Letter, Informed Consent, Parent Pre-Survey



Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Sophia Vincent, and I am currently a student at the University of Arkansas working toward a degree in K-6 teacher education and licensure. I am conducting a research project as part of my graduation requirement for the College of Education and Health Professions Honors Program. My project will be to investigate the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on empowering young adolescent girls, ages 10 to 13, to improve their self-concept, confidence, and leadership development. The girls will be mentored in small groups, five to seven students, by collegiate sorority women of Kappa Kappa Gamma from the University of Arkansas.

The program is called ***GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise*** and will be offered to sixth grade female students at McNair Middle School in the Fayetteville Public School District. Fifty girls will be selected, collectively, to participate from the applications returned to the school. The program will be held on Tuesdays at McNair Middle School from 3:30-6:30 p.m. GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise will be a five-week program beginning on Tuesday, September 11, 2018. The dates of the program will include: September 11, 18, and 25; October 2 and 9. The program will be literacy-based using reading, characters from stories, and activities related to the books to determine if literacy can be used to inspire preadolescent girls. Each week of the program will cover a different letter of the word "GIRLS" which will serve as the weekly theme. The theme will introduce a positive, empowering skill or tool that the participants will be able to use in their everyday lives and in the future to help them recognize their full potential in becoming leaders in their schools, communities, and society as a whole. Weekly themes are as follows:

- G – Growth Mindset
- I – Integrity
- R – Resilience
- L – Love & Loyalty
- S – Strengths

Through this program, participants will participate in weekly activities that will utilize different leadership strategies and tools. Participants will be asked to complete a pre- and post-evaluation and weekly journal responses. I will only be able to include your daughter's responses and work in my project findings with your signed consent. Please note that confidentiality will be maintained and that your daughter's name will not be used in recording or reporting results. All results will be recorded and reported anonymously. The attached informed consent form contains a more detailed description of this project. The application for the program is also attached. By signing and returning the both forms, you grant permission for your daughter to attend the GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise program, if selected, and for me to use her work and responses in the results of this project. Please take time to read over it with your daughter and discuss it thoroughly.

**Title:** The Effects of a Literacy-Based Mentoring Program on Empowering Preadolescent Girls to Improve Their Self-Concept, Confidence, and Leadership Development

**Researcher:**

Sophia Vincent  
Dr. Angela Elsass  
University of Arkansas  
College of Education and Health Professions  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
215 Peabody Hall  
Fayetteville, AR 72701-1201  
479-575-4209  
[smv001@uark.edu](mailto:smv001@uark.edu)  
[aelsass@uark.edu](mailto:aelsass@uark.edu)

**Compliance Contact Person:**

Ro Windwalker, Compliance Coordinator  
Research & Sponsored Programs  
Research Compliance  
University of Arkansas  
210 ADMIN  
Fayetteville, AR, 72701-1201  
479-575-2208  
[irb@uark.edu](mailto:irb@uark.edu)

**Description:** *GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise* is a program designed to determine the effects of a literacy-based mentoring program on empowering young adolescent girls to improve their self-concept, confidence, and leadership development. The program will be offered to sixth grade female students at McNair Middle School and will take place on Tuesdays from 3:30-6:30 p.m. for five weeks beginning on September 11, 2018.

The dates of the program will be as follows:

Tuesday, September 11  
Tuesday, September 18  
Tuesday, September 25  
Tuesday, October 2  
Tuesday, October 9

At the beginning of the study, participants will be given an informal assessment that will be scored by the researcher using the researcher created rubric to measure the level of students' confidence, self-esteem, and leadership qualities. Each week participants will participate in whole group lessons, small group discussions, and activities that will utilize different leadership strategies and tools. *GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise* participants will:

- G – Learn what it means to have a growth mindset and the importance of goal setting in moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset
- I – Explore the idea of taking responsibility for your own actions and showing kindness and respect to others
- R – Practice viewing obstacles and adversity as an opportunity for growth while maintaining a positive mindset
- L – Understand the importance of taking care of yourself and staying true to you – your values, ideas, and beliefs
- S – Discover their own strengths, how to effectively practice them, and appreciate the strengths of others

**Risks and Benefits:** There are no risks, other than those anticipated with regular classroom instruction, anticipated with this project.

The potential benefits for participants include:

- Becoming empowered/inspired to recognize their full potential and strengths
- Developing as a leader
- Gaining a sense of identity by examining powerful female literary characters
- Learning positive, empowering skills and tools to use in their everyday lives and in the future
- Contributing to the community and society as respectful, responsible, compassionate citizens

**Voluntary Participation:** Your child will participate in all activities during this program. However, the decision to allow your child's work and scores to be used in recording and analyzing data for this project is completely voluntary.

**Confidentiality:** All information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable Federal and State law and University policy. Confidentiality will be assured and maintained by the researcher through the establishment of a code. Each student will be assigned a number at random to establish the code. All data will be recorded and reported anonymously using the code. Only the researcher will have access to the code and all data will be kept in a secure location in the researcher's office. Once the study is successfully defended, the code will be destroyed.

**Right to Withdraw:** If you choose to allow your child's scores to be used now but at any time and for any reason decide not to allow them to be used, you may withdraw your consent. If you choose to withdraw your consent, your child's work and scores would not be recorded in the project data. There would not be any negative consequences for this decision.

**Informed Consent:** I \_\_\_\_\_, have read the description of this study. I understand the purpose of this project, the procedures that will be used, the potential risks and benefits, how confidentiality will be established and maintained, as well as the option to withdraw. I have read and discussed this project with my child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print your child's name here)

My signature below indicates that my child and I agree for her work and results to be recorded and analyzed as a participant in this project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have discussed this study with my parent/guardian, and I agree to participate. I understand that even if they agree, it's okay if I choose not to participate or change my mind about participating later.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child/Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Photo/Video Release**

In connection with my child's participation in the GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise program, I hereby authorize and direct Sophia Vincent permission to take photographs, video recordings, and/or sound recordings of the GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise program. I grant {name} permission to use the negatives, prints, motion pictures, video tapings, or any other reproduction of the same for educational purposes only in recording and reporting the results of this project.

I declare that I have read and understand the contents of this PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE, and I give my consent for the child (named above) to be photographed while attending GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Parent Survey**

On a scale from 1-5, please select how you feel about each statement. There is no right or wrong answer.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My daughter has the ability to achieve the things she sets her mind to.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter thinks and talks about the future.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter has strong friendships.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter can stand up to others when they are doing something wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter stands up for her friends.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter stands up for herself and what she believes in.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter makes good decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter looks for what she can learn out of the bad things that happen.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter knows how to work out problems she is faced with.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter is happy.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter often worries about what others think about her.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter is confident.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter likes to be a leader.	1	2	3	4	5
My daughter enjoys reading.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C2  
Participant Application – Information Sheet



**Participant Information**



**MCNAIR  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Please fill out this form thoroughly. We will use this information to plan a safe and enjoyable experience for the GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise program. Any information disclosed on this form will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy. You and your child will receive a confirmation letter if selected to participate in this program.

**Participant Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher and Pod: \_\_\_\_\_

T-shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Person to Notify in Case of an Emergency:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Information****MCNAIR  
MIDDLE SCHOOL****Medical Information:**

Allergies and Dietary Restrictions:

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Please list any special conditions we should be aware of (injuries, past surgeries, asthma, etc.)

---

**Transportation:**Who will pick your daughter up from the school?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Other authorized pick-up contacts:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Will your child be able to attend GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise all five weeks? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Dates my child will miss: \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix D  
Participant Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment



*Participant Pre-assessment*

On a scale from 1-5, please select how you feel about each statement. There is no right or wrong answer.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it.	1	2	3	4	5
Anyone can learn anything if they work hard.	1	2	3	4	5
I set goals for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel confident in my abilities to achieve the things I set my mind to.	1	2	3	4	5
I think about new activities or projects I would like to try.	1	2	3	4	5
I make plans for the future.	1	2	3	4	5

I can stand up to my friends when they are doing something wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
I think I make good decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to stand up for myself & what I believe in.	1	2	3	4	5
I know my values and what is important for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I am willing to stand up for a friend being picked on.	1	2	3	4	5
I can make a difference in my community.	1	2	3	4	5
I can make a difference in my school.	1	2	3	4	5

I feel confident that I can handle whatever comes my way.	1	2	3	4	5
I look for what I can learn out of bad things that happen.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel stronger because of the problems I have faced.	1	2	3	4	5
If I have a problem, I can work it out.	1	2	3	4	5
I am afraid to have an unpopular opinion.	1	2	3	4	5

*Participant Pre-assessment*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am happy with who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
I worry about what people are thinking about me.	1	2	3	4	5
How I feel about myself depends on what others think of me.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I can be myself around other people.	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel pressured to do things because my friends do them.	1	2	3	4	5

Overall, I feel good about my abilities compared to others (e.g. at school, playing sports or socially).	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I am a valuable person who has a lot to offer.	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership comes in various forms and spans multiple dimensions.	1	2	3	4	5
Women can be leaders in any career they choose.	1	2	3	4	5
Men and women are equally respected as leaders.	1	2	3	4	5
I see myself as a leader.	1	2	3	4	5
I am capable of becoming a leader.	1	2	3	4	5
I have leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5
Developing as a leader is challenging.	1	2	3	4	5

I enjoy reading.	1	2	3	4	5
I like to read about characters that I can identify with in my own life.	1	2	3	4	5
The characters I read about help me discover who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel empowered by the characters I read about.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel comfortable sharing my personal thoughts with others.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a mentor that I look up to.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a mentor that I trust.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E  
Small Group Mentor Leader Application



Small Group Leader Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pledge Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Year in School: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper and attach:

- (1) What are you involved in at the U of A outside of Kappa Kappa Gamma?
- (2) What are you involved in within Kappa Kappa Gamma?
- (3) Why do you feel you should be chosen as a mentor for **GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise**?  
Please include any past experiences you think might be helpful!
- (4) In order for your mentoring experience to be successful, describe what you think your role as a mentor would be and explain how you are willing to develop a relationship with your mentees to develop their leadership skills. What tools do you have to develop a relationship with your mentees? Please include any skills, strengths, or personality traits you possess.

Appendix F  
Participant Weekly Formative Assessment

## Growth Mindset Self-Reflection

- ❖ Write 3 things you learned about growth mindset:
  - > (1)
  - > (2)
  - > (3)
- ❖ What is one area that you will apply your growth mindset to this week?
- ❖ How will you do that?
- ❖ Why is it important for you, as a leader, to have a growth mindset and set goals for yourself?

YOU ARE  
*capable*  
OF SO MUCH  
*more*  
THAN YOU CAN EVEN  
*imagine*



## Integrity Self-Reflection

❖ Write 3 things you learned about integrity:

➤ (1)

➤ (2)

➤ (3)

❖ What are some ways that you can show integrity in your school this week?  
In the community?

❖ Why is it important for you, as a leader, to show integrity?

Integrity is choosing  
courage over comfort;  
choosing what is right  
over what is fun, fast,  
or easy; and choosing  
to practice our values  
rather than simply  
professing them.

Brené Brown



## Resilience Self-Reflection

- ❖ Write 3 things you learned about resilience:
  - (1)
  - (2)
  - (3)
- ❖ What are some areas in your life where you can have a positive outlook at the obstacles you face?
- ❖ How can you view those obstacles as learning opportunities?
- ❖ Why is it important for you, as a leader, to be resilient in the face of adversity?

You gain strength,  
courage, and  
confidence by every  
experience in which  
you really stop to  
look fear in the  
face. Do the thing  
you think you  
cannot do.

-Eleanor  
Roosevelt



## Love & Loyalty Self-Reflection

- ❖ Write 3 things you learned about loving and staying true to yourself:
  - > (1)
  - > (2)
  - > (3)
- ❖ What are some specific ways you can take care of yourself this week?
- ❖ How will you stay true to your values this week and in the future?
- ❖ Why is it important for you, as a leader, to show self-respect and stay true to what you believe?

*"Beauty is being the best possible version  
of yourself, inside and out."*

*"I believe that happy girls  
are the prettiest girls."*

*- Audrey Hepburn*



## Strengths Self-Reflection

- ❖ Write 3 things you learned about strengths:
  - > (1)
  - > (2)
  - > (3)
- ❖ How will you use your strengths in positive ways this week?
- ❖ What are some ways you will show respect for others' strengths?
- ❖ Why is it important for you, as a leader, to know your strengths and to use them?

Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence.

Sheryl Sandberg  
Facebook COO





Appendix G  
Small Group Mentor Leaders Anecdotal Notes Template

<b>Growth Mindset</b>			
<b>Day: Tuesday, September 11, 2018</b>			
<u><b>Time</b></u>	<u><b>Activity</b></u>	<u><b>Participants</b></u>	<u><b>Notes</b></u>
2:45-3:10	Snacks/Hangout	Whole Group	
3:10-3:15	Program Introduction and Overview	Whole Group	
3:15-3:45	Introduce Growth Mindset; Storytime; Growth Mindset Poster	Whole Group	
3:45-4:00	Icebreakers in SGs	Small Groups	
4:00-4:30	Creating a Magnificent Thing	Small Groups	
4:30-5:00	Goal Setting	Independent in Small Groups	
5:00-5:10	Brain Break - "Would You Rather?"	Whole Group	
5:10-5:30	Fixed vs. Growth Mindset Chart & Statements	Whole Group	
5:30 - 6:00	Self-Reflection & Dinner	Independent	

<b>Integrity</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, September 18, 2018</b>			
<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Participants</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
2:50-3:00/05	Snacks/Hangout	Whole Group	
3:05-3:10	Community Builder	Whole Group	
3:10-3:25	Introduce Integrity (Umbrella) + 5 Fundamental Values Groups	Whole Group	
3:25-4:00	Storytime; Create Own Bucket; Building Relationships	Whole Group	
3:45/50-4:00	Integrity Acrostic Poem	Whole Group	
4:00-4:10	Icebreakers in SGs + Journal Activity (3 ways to fill & dip)	Small Groups	
4:10-4:35	What are your values?	Independent in Small Groups	
4:35-5:00	Wonder Precepts Scenarios	Small Groups	
5:05-5:20	Share Scenarios with whole group	Whole Group	
5:20-5:35/40	Precepts Reflection (if time); "Let your life speak" sticky note chart; Self-Reflection	Independent	

<b>Resilience</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, September 25, 2018</b>			
<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Participants</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
2:50-3:00/05	Snacks/Hangout	Whole Group	
3:05-3:20	Community Builder - Tennis Ball Activity	Whole Group	
3:20-3:40	Introduce Resilience with Tennis Ball + Story Time	Whole Group	
3:40-3:50	"I Am..., I Can..., I Have..."	Small Group	
3:50-4:10	Character Study	Whole Group	
4:10-4:20	Journal Activity: Overcoming Challenges	Small Groups	
4:20-4:35	Overcoming Obstacles Social Media Post	Independent in Small Groups	
4:35-5:00	Environmental Levels Skits	Small Groups	
5:00-5:05	Focus Exercise - Breck's Theater Warm Up	Whole Group	
5:05-5:20	Share Scenarios with whole group	Whole Group	
5:20-5:35/40	Connection Chart + Revisit Mission Statement + Self-Reflection	Independent	

<b>Love &amp; Loyalty</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, October 2, 2018</b>			
<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Participants</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
2:50-3:00/05	Snacks/Hangout/ Focus Exercise	Whole Group	
3:05-3:20	Aspire to Be Mirror Activity	Whole Group	
3:20-3:35	What does "Love" & "Loyalty" Mean? + Story Time	Whole Group	
3:35-3:45	What would you change & what saying resonates with you?	Whole Group/ Independent	
3:45-4:00	I Am Pennant	Whole Group/ Independent	
4:00-4:10	Skittles Icebreaker	Small Groups	
4:10-4:20	Journal Activity: Let's Celebrate!	Independent in Small Groups	
4:20-4:30	Journal Activity: Staying True to Your Values	Independent	
4:30-4:45	A Mindful Snack	Small Groups	
4:45-5:10	Girl Wheel	Independent in Small Groups	
5:10-5:20	Group Work - Relating to G, I, & R	Whole Group	
5:20-5:35	Closing Mirror Activity + Self- Reflection	Independent	

<b>Strengths</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, October 9, 2018</b>			
<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Participants</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
2:50-3:15	Snacks/Picture/Sign Frames/Ticktock	Whole Group	
3:15-3:30	Strengths & Weaknesses + Storytime	Whole Group	
3:30-40	Leadership Assessment	Whole Group/ Independent	
3:40-3:55	Leadership Style Group Discussion + Strengths Cards Activity	Small Group (Leadership Group)	
3:55-4:20	Tree of Strengths + Puzzle Piece + I Am Poem (if time)	Independent in Small Groups	
4:20-30	Brain Break/ Transition	Whole Group	
4:30-5:10	Color Group Small Groups - make visual chart + skit	Small Groups (Original)	
5:10-5:20	LEADER Acrostic Poem	Whole Group	
5:20-5:30	We Can, We Are, We Will	Whole Group	
5:30-5:40	What does "leader" mean to you? + Self-Reflection	Whole Group/ Independent	

## Appendix H

### Small Group Mentor Leader Evaluation



#### Small Group Leader Evaluation

The small group leader evaluation will be given as a Google Survey. The first five questions will be short-answer responses. The remaining questions will be ranked on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) with an option to provide additional comments for each statement.

- How did GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise impact you? What did you gain/learn?
- What changes did you witness in the participants in your small group?
- Did you feel the curriculum was relevant to the participants? Why or why not?
- How did your small group discussions play out? (How engaging were your small group discussions? Did all of the group members participate?)
- What did you learn about young adolescent girls?
- My small group understood that the brain can grow and develop by moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.
- My small group's confidence in their abilities to achieve things and set goal for themselves improved.
- My small group learned the importance of taking responsibility for your own actions and being respectful of others.
- My small group was able to understand that how you treat others can affect how you feel.
- My small group developed resilience and learned ways to face challenges and obstacles with a positive attitude.
- My small group developed strategies to take care of themselves.
- My small group improved in appreciating who they are and what they believe in.
- My small group learned how to develop their strengths and improved in their views of themselves as leaders.
- Please provide any suggestions for changes to the program and curriculum.

## Appendix I1 Growth Mindset (Week One) Lesson Plan

# Growth Mind-set

**Picture Book:** *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashely Spires

**Objective:** Learn what it means to have a growth mindset and the importance of goal setting in moving from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset

### Whole Group

#### **Snacks, Hangout, Music Playing, etc. (2:40-3:10)**

- Allow time for girls to come in, get water, eat a snack, feel comfortable, make a nametag, interact with small group leaders
- “Oh, Me Too!” Icebreaker

#### **Introduction to Program (3:10-3:15)**

- A. Intro to program, overview, journals
  - a. Hello and welcome to GIRLS: Leaders on the Rise! This program is designed to teach you about different aspects of leadership and what it means to be a strong, confident girl leader! We are so excited that you are here and look forward to all the fun we will have in the next few weeks! When we come together each week, we will cover a different letter of the word “GIRLS.” (Go through and introduce each letter). As you come in each Tuesday, we will have snacks and water for you. There may be some fun games or activities going on.
  - b. Once everyone is here we will start out as a large group to introduce the theme for the week. We will read a book that relates to our weekly theme and have a little bit of discussion before breaking into small groups. You will be divided into small groups that you will meet with each week. The girls serving as your leaders are members of Kappa Kappa Gamma from the U of A. In your small groups, you will do some more activities and have discussions about our theme for the week.

#### ***GIRLS Journal***

- c. Your leaders will give each of you a journal that you will use throughout the next five weeks. This journal is just for you – to record your thoughts and ideas. You will be able to keep your journal at the end of the program and refer back to it. You will have a lot of fun with your small group leaders and the other girls in your group. I encourage you to really get to know the other girls in your small group. At the end of each week, we will come back together as a whole group and have a wrap-up discussion and activity. We will have dinner provided for you before leaving.

#### **Introduce growth mindset (3:15-3:45)**

- B. This week we are starting with the first letter in the word “GIRLS” – G. The G in GIRLS stands for “Growth Mindset.” Does anyone know what it means to have a growth mindset, or would anyone like to take a guess?
  - a. A **growth mindset** occurs when you believe that you can improve and increase your intelligence and abilities with effort and the right strategies. You believe your potential is limitless.
  - b. A **fixed mindset** happens when you believe that you cannot change the amount of intelligence you have or your skills and abilities cannot be improved. You believe you only have a *fixed* amount.

## Growth Mind-set

- C. We are going to read a story about a young girl who want to see her idea come to life!  
However, her mindset creates an obstacle for her when it seems everything she tries doesn't work.

### Story Time

- D. Read *The Most Magnificent Thing*
- a. Follow up questions
    - i. What are some things you noticed about the character?
      1. *Before moving on, make sure participants realize that the character is a female and very young.*
    - ii. What happened when the girl got mad?
    - iii. What kind of attitude did she need to complete her "most magnificent thing"?
    - iv. How many tries did it take her?

### Growth Mindset poster

(*Breaking the fixed mindset – READ Growth Mindset Poster*)

#### **Brain Plasticity**

- E. Before we can learn how to have a growth mindset, we have to learn a little bit about our brains.
- F. I am going to introduce a new word to you – "plasticity"
- a. Did you know that your brain can change, grow, and become "smarter"?
  - b. That's what "plasticity" means. Plasticity is the ability of our brains to constantly grow, develop, and evolve
    - i. This means that as we learn, experience, and practice new things, our intelligence and skill can grow
    - ii. It takes practice and effort.
  - c. Our brains are like our muscles. When we exercise and work out our muscles, what happens? The same goes for our brain. When we give it a good work out, it can grow and become stronger.
    - i. How can we give our brain a good workout?
      1. Eat, brush your teeth, write your name with your nondominant hand
      2. Pick up an object and think of five other ways you can use it than its intended use
  - d. Think about meeting someone new
    - i. Do you automatically remember their name or everything about them?
    - ii. No, but the more you interact with them and make connections, the better you remember that person.
    - iii. The same happens with our brain cells – neurons. When we try something new (eating or writing with the opposite hand; thinking of other ways to use an object) our neurons make new connections, but they don't automatically stick. We have to practice. The more we practice, the stronger those connections become.
  - e. Our brains are not just shaped by our genetic code. We do not have a "fixed" amount of intelligence and skill. People with a fixed mindset believe that we do.
    - i. But actually, our brains are also shaped by our environments and experiences.



## Growth Mind-set

- ii. Someone with a fixed mindset might think, “\_\_\_\_\_.” But someone with a growth mindset would think, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

### **Fixed vs. Growth Mindset Statements**

- G. Give each participant a half brain cut out. Half of the cards have a fixed mindset statement, and the other half has growth mindset statements.
- a. Once each girl has a card, ask them to stand up and find their pair.
  - b. Each fixed mindset statement has a paired statement that represents a growth mindset.
- H. When everyone has found their pair, have each partner read her statement aloud to the group.
- a. *May ask the group why certain statements would be classified as “fixed” or “growth.”*

### **Creating Right Strategies**

- I. The poster we read earlier mentioned the effort it takes to grow our brains, but it also mentioned “right strategies.” It is important to develop strategies as to how we are going to do something. When we want to achieve something, we must set goals for ourselves and develop an action plan to help us achieve our goals.
- a. This is what you will be working on in your small groups. You will set three goals for yourself – a long-term goal, a short-term goal, and a reading goal.
  - b. Think about the character from the book. Do you think she would have benefited if she had set a goal and created an action plan? Why?
- J. SGLs will further discuss how to break the fixed mindset and help you set your three goals and develop your action steps. Throughout the next five weeks, we will revisit our goals each week. We will evaluate our progress along with any challenges we might face.
- K. Announce Small Groups

## **Small Group:**

### **Introductions (3:45-4:00)**

- L. Get-To-Know-You game, introductions, etc.

### **Create Magnificent Things (4:00-4:30)**

- M. Each small group is given a basket of materials. As a group, the girls will create their “most magnificent thing” given the supplies that are in the basket.
- a. Choose a goal for the project. Leaders will provide their groups with guidelines of what to create. Ex.) the longest thing, the tallest thing, the strongest thing, etc.
- N. Discuss with group the outcome of the task.
- a. Did you find it difficult? Why or why not?
  - b. How did the task make you think differently?
  - c. Why did you have to use your mind differently?

\*\*Take notes in your folder\*\*

## Growth Mind-set

### **Independent:**

#### **Goal Setting: (4:30-5:00)**

- O. Part of being able to achieve anything is putting in the effort and creating the right strategies. We are going to work on building strategies and action plans to help us achieve some of our goals. It is important for leaders to have a vision for themselves and look forward to where they are going.
- P. When setting goals for ourselves, it's important to set SMART goals – goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely. Let's go through what each of these means.
  - a. Look at the chart provided in your journal. Refer to SMART goals chart & example of SMART goals.
  - b. Each of you are going to set 3 goals for yourself in your journal. You will create a short-term goal, a long-term goal, and a reading goal.
    - i. \*\*Review of short- vs. long-term goal
  - c. For each goal you set, it is very important that you develop an action plan to go along with it, or steps that you will take to achieve this goal.
    - i. A good action plan has about 3 steps.
    - ii. Sometimes we have to modify and adjust our action plans – be open to that
  - d. We will revisit these goals each week and see how you are doing and the progress you are all making.
- Q. Participants will plan goals in journal
  - a. When you are finished brainstorming and writing your goals in your journal, I will give you 3 goal-setting cards that you can transfer your goals and action plans onto and take home with you to look at this week.
  - b. Give each participant one of each goal card: short-term, long-term, reading goal

### **Closure/Wrap-up:**

#### **\*\*Brain Break\*\* (5:00-5:10)**

#### **Would You Rather?**

#### **Journal Activity: Fixed vs. Growth Mindset Chart (5:10-5:30)**

- P. Let's recap and reflect on what we've learned today. In your journal on page 2, there is a fixed vs. growth mindset chart. Let's brainstorm together a few differences between the two.
  - a. What does it look like to have fixed mindset? A growth mindset?
  - b. How would someone view a challenging task or a difficult assignment?
  - c. What would one think about her skills or ability to play a new sport, try a new instrument, or start something new?
  - d. *Make anchor chart*
- Q. Write down a few points in each bubble.
- R. Whole group discussion:
  - i. Why is it important for leaders to have a growth mindset?

#### **Self-Reflection in Journal + Dinner (5:30-6:00)**

## Growth Mind-set

### **Other Activities (if time allows):**

#### ***Group Activity: Growth Mindset Conversation Starters***

- A. I am going to give each of you a conversation card. Read the question to yourself and think about your answer. I'll give you a few minutes to think, and then we will share.
  - a. If one of our member's shares a thought that you can relate to or if you have a different example, please share with the group.
  - b. You can make notes on back of card to help you gather your thoughts if you would like.
- B. Discuss as small group
  - a. Make sure every girl gets the opportunity to share

#### ***Scenarios***

- C. Each group is given a different scenario
  - a. Discuss as group a fixed vs. growth mindset solution.
  - b. Share with whole group at end

## Appendix I2 Integrity (Week Two) Lesson Plan

# Integrity

**Picture Book:** *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* By: Carol McCloud

**Objective:** Explore the idea of taking responsibility for your own actions and showing kindness and respect to others

### Whole Group:

#### **Snacks/Hangout (2:50-3:00)**

#### **Would You Rather? (Fun Game)**

##### ***Team Building***

- A. Divide girls into 5 groups (Skittles) – each group will be a team
  - a. The teams will spread out in the room to five stations (SGLs will have a station)
  - b. Each station will have one of the five fundamental values of integrity
  - c. There will be one marker for each station and the girls must work as a team and use the strings attached to the marker to write the word (value) on a piece of paper.
  - d. When finished writing the word, have girls discuss the meaning of the character trait
    - i. What does each trait mean?
    - ii. How do we show/display this trait?

#### **Introduction to Integrity (3:00-3:10)**

##### ***5 Fundamental values of integrity***

- B. Introduce the word “Integrity”
  - a. All-encompassing: the 5 words are the fundamental values of integrity
  - b. Think about it like an umbrella
    - i. ***\*\*Use umbrella example\*\****
- C. We are responsible for what we say, think, feel, and do (PPT slide)
- D. Integrity takes positive thinking
  - a. You may want to do the “easy” thing, but you know what the right thing to do is.
  - b. Relate to Growth Mindset

#### **Story Time (3:10-3:20)**

- E. Read *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*
- F. Follow up questions & Discussion
  - a. What is the one purpose of your bucket?
  - b. Discuss what it means to be a bucket-filler & bucket-dipper
    - i. *Many of the girls will probably be familiar with this concept.*
    - ii. *How do you fill a bucket?*
    - iii. *How do you dip from someone’s bucket?*
  - c. What feelings or emotions are associated with a full bucket? An empty bucket?
  - d. This seems like a very simple and basic idea, but what about the moments when we aren’t feeling so kind?
    - i. What about when someone isn’t kind to us or hurts our feelings?
    - ii. What about times when it’s easier, quicker, or more convenient to not do the right thing?
    - iii. How often do we let our own feelings stand in the way of helping out someone else?

## Integrity

### Integrity

- G. A person who is a bucket-filler is someone who shows integrity
- H. What does it mean to show integrity?
  - a. Integrity means doing the right thing even when no one else is watching
    - i. Being honest, respectful, and responsible
    - ii. Builds strong friendships and relationships
    - iii. Acting on your values
  - iv. You will talk about your values in your small groups this afternoon.

### ***Building Relationships***

- I. An important part of being a leader is building and maintain good, positive relationships and friendships
  - a. Leaders need to model positive friendships and relationships
  - b. Leaders build relationships – they fill buckets
    - i. They don't tear them apart, or dip from others' buckets
  - c. Let's think about what kind of leaders we want to be
  - d. It only takes one person to stand up and say the right thing.
  - e. We won't be good leaders if we aren't good friends or if we are not honest, respectful, responsible, fair, and trustworthy
- J. This afternoon we are going to discuss ways to show respect, how to take responsibility for our actions, our values
- K. Pair up with someone around you (you don't need to get up and move to do this) and discuss what integrity looks like in relationships

### ***Make Your Own Bucket (3:20-3:45)***

- L. Girls will create and decorate their own buckets
  - a. SGLs help create a few stations around the room
  - b. We will use our buckets each week and help fill each other's buckets. Each week you will write a positive note to one of the girls in your small group and place a drop in their bucket.

### Small Group/Independent:

#### ***\*\*Brain Break\*\****

#### ***Group Discussion (3:45-4:10)***

- M. Community Building Activity – Friendship cards
  - a. Give each girl a card and have her write her thoughts on the back.
  - b. Have girls share if they want to
  - c. Discuss why it is important to show integrity and be kind as friends and leaders.
- N. Girls will draw a name of someone in their group. They are to write a positive note to that person and put it in her bucket.
- O. ***\*\*Go over goals\*\****
  - a. Check in and see if the girls worked on their goals and followed the action steps they created last week
- P. Revisit *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*

## Integrity

- a. What stood out to you from the book? How can you apply that to your everyday life?
- b. Think about how bucket filling and dipping is related to our feelings.
  - i. How do you feel when someone fills your bucket?
  - ii. How do you feel when you fill someone's bucket?
  - iii. How do you feel when you see other people filling others' buckets?
  - iv. What about when someone dips from your bucket?
  - v. How about when you dip from someone's bucket?
  - vi. Have you ever witnessed someone else being mean to another person? How did that make you feel?
  - vii. Notice your different feelings. Not only do you feel good when someone is nice to you, but it also makes you feel good when you are showing kindness and respect to others.

***Journal Activity: 3 Ways to Fill and Dip from a Bucket***

- Q. Open your journal to pages 10 & 11. On one side there are 3 drops falling into a bucket and on the other are 3 drops falling out of a bucket.
  - a. I want you to think about 3 ways that you can fill someone's bucket in your life this week. Maybe it is a friend at school, someone at home, a teacher or principal. Write down 3 actual things that you will commit to do this week to fill 3 people's buckets.
  - b. On the other side (pg. 11), think of three ways that you can dip from someone's bucket. This may be 3 ways you have seen other people dip from others' buckets or 3 ways that someone has dipped from your bucket. Or a combination.
- R. At the beginning, we talked a little about integrity means to act on your values. So, what is a value?
  - a. Let the girls popcorn out answers.
  - b. Personal values are things that are important to you in your life (from GA curriculum)
  - c. They are the beliefs you hold that determine the choices and decisions that you make. Think about this quote, "Values are like fingerprints. Nobody's are the same but you leave them all over everything you do."
  - d. See if their thoughts or ideas about values change. Ask: Now what would you say about values?

**What are your values? (4:10-4:35)**

***Journal Activity: What are your values?***

- S. Turn to page 12 in your journal. Look over the list of values and see which ones stand out to you. If you have any questions about what a value means, ask me and I can help define it for you or give you an example.
  - a. *Small group leaders will have a list of values and definitions in their notebooks.*
  - b. Give the girls time to look over and think through the values
- T. Now, out of the ones that stood out to you, pick your top 5 personal values.
  - a. It may be helpful to think about these questions to help you select:
    - i. Which five from the list are most important to you and your life?
    - ii. What defines your character?

## Integrity

- iii. Which of these do you base your choices and decisions on?
- b. After you select your five, write them in your journal on the next page (pg. 13).
  - i. *Give the girls a few minutes to make selections and write in their journals.*

### **Activity: Values Bookmark**

- U. From the five you selected, you are going to choose one and come up with three ways that you can work on displaying that value throughout the week. Write the value in the pink box and the three ways you will display it underneath.
  - a. Think about specific ways you can display this value. The more specific, the better.
- V. Now you are going to make your Values Bookmark. You will be able to use this bookmark when you read or to keep in your notebook to help remind you of this value and why it's important to you. Put it somewhere you will see every day.
  - a. For your bookmark, you can either choose the value that is most important to you or the one you want to really work at to improve.
  - b. Write the value on the front and the three ways you will work to show it this week on the back.
- W. Pass out materials to make bookmark
  - a. Allow 20 or so minutes to make. They should have their ideas down in their journal before making bookmark. This time will be for decorating and transferring their three ways to show the value.

### **Collaborative Small Group:**

#### **Precepts Scenario: *Wonder* (4:35-5:10)**

- X. We are going to end our time this afternoon with a small group activity inspired by the book *Wonder*. How many of you have read this book?
  - a. What do you remember from the book (or movie)? What stood out to you?
  - b. Remember Mr. Browne's precepts? Each group will be given a precept and will come up with a skit that shows a scenario depicting integrity. The skit needs to help the girls understand what the precept means.
- Y. Read your precept to your group and ask what they think it means to them.
  - a. How does the precept relate to integrity?
  - b. Now think of an example of a scenario or situation where the precept is shown. Come up with a skit that shows how integrity is related to this precept.
    - i. *How can you apply this to your life? Think of a real-life situation you may face at school to come up with your skit.*
    - ii. *\*\*Possible Idea: skit should revolve around a conflict between friends*
      - 1. *How will you solve it?*
    - iii. *Encourage the girls to find a way to show their particular value in the skit*

### **Closure/Wrap-up:**

#### **Precept Skits (5:15-5:30)**

- Z. Come back together as a whole group and share skits.
  - a. *If time: Girls will select which precept stood out to them & write a reflection about it in their journal*
  - b. *\*have written precepts displayed on slideshow as skits are being performed*

## Integrity

### **INTEGRITY Poem (if time allows)**

- A. INTEGRITY acrostic poem as whole group

*Each value group create their own poem and share to create a class poem?*

- a. An acrostic poem is one form of poetry. This type of poem is one where the first letter of each line spells out a word or phrase. We are going to create an acrostic poem out of the word "Integrity."
  - i. Poem can be characteristics of being a good friend
  - ii. It does not have to rhyme.
  - iii. I will go through each letter and you will raise your hand and give me a way to show integrity that starts with that letter.
  - iv. It can be an example of showing integrity or part of the definition (what it means to show integrity)

### **Random Acts of Kindness Bingo**

- B. Read Kindness Challenge Letter

- a. Challenge to complete throughout the week & bring back next week
  - i. Complete as many as you can this week and bring it back next week. For each task that you complete, you will answer the question that corresponds with it on the back and you will receive a drop in your bucket for the completed tasks.
  - ii. Your goal is to complete all 24 by the end of the program.
  - iii. If you think of acts that you would like to add, write them down and bring them next week to share.
- b. Reflect next week on what they learned.
  - i. How did people respond/react to their kindness?

### ***"Let your life speak"***

- C. Bring in RAK Board next week
- D. What does this quote mean to you?
  - a. Write on sticky note and place on poster

### **Self-Reflection in Journal + Dinner (5:30/5:40)**



## Integrity

### **Other Activities (if time allows):**

#### **Activities if girls in small group finish early:**

##### ***Journal Activity: Empowering Mentors***

- E. Mentors play an important role in our lives. A mentor is someone you look up to. They could be a teacher, coach, small group leader, Sunday School teacher, etc. Think about someone you look up to. Mentors often display the values that are most important to us. Can you think of someone in your life that displays the values you selected as most important to you? Someone who inspires you?
- a. Mentors support, show up, encourage, question, etc.
    - i. Why are they so inspirational to you?
  - b. In your journal, on page 14, give a few examples of how or why this person inspires you. What values do they show?

##### ***Quote Drawing***

- F. Have the girls write a quote they believe describes their life & draw a picture of why they chose this quote
- a. How does it represent them?
  - b. Why is it important?

Appendix I3  
Resilience (Week Three) Lesson Plan

## Resilience

**Picture Book:** *She Persisted*

**Objective:** Practice viewing obstacles and challenges as learning opportunities

### **Whole Group:**

**Reflection and Discussion (3:00/05-3:20)**

A. Icebreaker

- a. Say name + something you love that starts with first letter
  - i. How this ties into mental health
  - ii. Acknowledging someone exists & that they matter by saying their name
  - iii. Have girls say the two names before theirs before stating their name & thing they love
- b. Tennis ball activity
  - i. Toss the tennis ball to each girl in the circle without letting it hit the ground.
  - ii. Say the name of the girl you are throwing to before you throw it.  
Everyone should be given the tennis ball before coming back to me
- c. What do you notice about the tennis ball when it drops?
  - i. It bounces back. If a force acts against it and knocks it to the ground, it pops right back up
- d. Apply this to your life
  - i. How do you react when a force acts against you?
  - ii. What do you do when faced with a challenge or an obstacle?

B. Think back to the goals you set for yourself on the 1<sup>st</sup> week

- a. Ask who has been following their goals from 1<sup>st</sup> week. Who has made progress in the goals they set?
  - i. *Allow time to share.*
- b. Has anyone faced any challenges or maybe you're currently facing an obstacle?
  - i. Have you had to change the ways you planned to achieve your goals?
  - ii. Did you change any of the steps in your action plan?
  - iii. Keep those challenges in the back of your mind, and we will revisit them in just a minute.

**Story Time (3:20-3:40)**

- C. We are going to read a book about 13 American women who changed the world
- a. All of these women have something in common
    - i. They all faced challenges
  - b. Pay attention to the different challenges these women faced
    - i. Did they give up or keep going?
  - c. Read *She Persisted*
    - i. What did all 13 women do when they faced a challenge?
    - ii. These women were resilient

**Examples from book:**

- d. Let's go back to the tennis ball example

## Resilience

- i. Think about the forces that act against it as the challenges & obstacles we face
  - 1. Throw ball against wall and catch
- ii. Think about this: Were these women written about in this book because of their accomplishments or because of the process and effort they put in?
  - 1. **\*\*Focus on the process, not the outcome!**
    - a. Persistence
  - 2. Not a book about outcomes → these women all had different outcomes
- iii. *Go through examples & when discussing the challenge, throw ball against wall*
  - 1. *Ball bouncing back → these women didn't let a challenge keep them down*
- e. Harriet Tubman – faced many challenges leading slaves to freedom
  - i. Risked her life
  - ii. Had to remain hidden and secretly help the slaves
    - 1. No one could know what she was doing
- f. Helen Keller – she faced the challenges of being deaf and blind
  - i. Those were not things she could change
  - ii. Learned how to live with them and learn new ways of doing things
- g. Sally Ride – astronaut
  - i. Many people didn't believe women could succeed in math or science and therefore space exploration
- h. Sonia Sotomayor – first Latina to be on the Supreme Court
  - i. Faced a language barrier – had to speak English as well as she did Spanish
  - ii. Health challenge with diabetes
- i. These are all challenges and obstacles, or punches, that these women faced. They persisted and bounced back.

***Apply to Self:***

- j. Now, apply this to your life. Think about the challenges you thought about before we read the book. Those may be something acting against you.
  - i. What are some other things that create a challenge or obstacle in your life?
    - 1. Have you been teased by others at school?
    - 2. Can your classmates be mean sometimes?
    - 3. *Allow them to provide examples?*
- k. How many of you have social media?
  - i. When you post a picture, do you post the pics from your bad days when things are going wrong or you make a mistake?
  - ii. Why do we only post the “best” pics – when we feel good and think we look good

## Resilience

- iii. What are we afraid of?
- I. Today we are going to look at how we can be resilient to those challenges.  
Rebound like the tennis ball. No matter what might make you stumble or hit you unexpectedly, you pop right back up. Don't let it keep you down.

### **Collaborative Small Group:**

#### **Icebreaker (3:40-3:50)**

- D. "I Am..., I Can..., I Have..."
  - a. Give each girl 3 sticky notes and have them write a statement(s) for each sentence starter on the sticky note
  - b. Identify what you can do, what you have, and who you are → helpful in building resilience
    - i. Resilience means your ability to bounce back & overcome challenges you might face
  - c. This will tie back into Strengths week
- E. Girls will place drops in each other's buckets
- F. If any of the girls completed the integrity acts, put drops in their buckets

#### **Character Study (3:50-4:10)**

- G. Each group will select a woman from the book and do a "character study"
  - a. Develop character profile
    - i. Who is she? What did she do/invent? Why is she in this book?
    - ii. What was/were her goal(s)?
    - iii. What action steps did she take?
    - iv. What obstacles/challenges did she face?
    - v. How did she overcome them? How was she resilient?
  - b. There will be supplies (paper, markers, etc.) for each group to create a character profile
  - c. Each group can create and design their profile however they want. Tell your small group, "I want you to put yourself in this woman's shoes. How would you feel? What do you think she was like?"
    - i. Create a Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter page that reflects this character. Make her a profile page that tells who she is, why she is famous, her goals, dreams, & aspirations, challenges she faced, how she overcame them. Create a few statements or "posts" that you think she would have made if she had social media during this time.

### **Independent:**

#### **Journal Activity: Overcoming Challenges (4:10-4:20)**

- H. At the beginning of this afternoon, you were asked to think back to the goals you set for yourself on the first week.
  - a. On page 20 of your journal, you will find a space for you to revisit your goals. There are three columns in the chart. On the left side, write down your 3 goals.

## Resilience

- b. Take some time and think about the challenges and obstacles you have faced with each goal and write those down in the middle column.
- c. Give a few minutes for the girls to fill in the first 2 columns. Ask them to wait to complete the 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- d. Now think about what it means to have a growth mindset. Remember that having a growth mindset means that you aren't limited in your skills, intelligence, or ability. You see failure and challenges as learning opportunities. This relates growth mindset to resilience. Look at the challenges you faced with each of your goals. How can you view them as learning opportunities? How will the challenges you have faced help you grow? Write down some of your thoughts in the column on the right.

### **Overcoming Obstacle Social Media/Blog Post about Self! (4:20-4:35)**

- I. Imagine yourself in the *She Persisted* book. What would you be known for? Think about if you were to become famous for something – what would it be?
  - a. Maybe one of your goals that you accomplished, a great achievement, something you are passionate about
    - i. Envision yourself having accomplished your goal. Pretend you are a journalist writing a front-page story for a newspaper that features your achievement
    - ii. Notice how you feel and your confidence level
    - iii. What obstacles did you face or overcome? How can you use those to share with others that it is okay to fail and make mistakes.
  - b. Create a social media/blog post about your accomplishments
    - i. Be creative and include challenges you might have faced and how you overcame them!
    - ii. Show viewers that there were moments when you weren't okay and that is okay!
- J. Be transparent with others
  - a. Embrace mistakes and challenges
  - b. It will encourage others to do the same

### **Collaborative Small Group:**

#### **5 Levels of Environment (4:35-5:00)**

- K. 5 levels of environment
  - a. Now we are going to look at what being resilient looks like in our environment. Everyone has their own level of environment. Each level of environment represents a different circle of interaction that you have in your own life that is different from everyone else. No two people's environment looks the same. Even if you are siblings, your interactions with your family and friends look different. You may play different sports, have different interests, or be involved in different activities. This all makes you who you are!
  - b. Look at the 5 levels of environment on page 21 of your journal.

## Resilience

- i. Your smallest and closest level is you as an individual. As you move up a level, your circle gets bigger. You add people and situations to your environment.
- ii. Your next closest level is your family, those you interact with on a daily basis.
- iii. Next comes your peers. You may see them often and have many interactions with them but they are a level beyond your family.
- iv. School is next. You have many interactions at school, but the people you are closest to may not be here and you do not spend all of your time here. This is only part of who you are.
- v. The largest level is your community. It encompasses all of the other components and adds to your environment as well. Your community could be other places you visit, your church, other organizations outside of school that you are involved in. The library would be an example of something in your community.
- c. We face challenges in each level.

### ***Role Play/Scenario***

- L. Each group is given an environment level and is to come up with a scenario of a challenge that might be faced within that level.
  - a. Think about different factors that play a role within that level. What challenges and obstacles might come up?
    - i. How can you show resilience and keep a positive attitude? How will you view it as a learning opportunity? Decide how you are going to role play and share with the group.
    - ii. *How can I see this as a learning opportunity to grow?*
  - b. Green – Individual
  - c. Blue – Family
  - d. Orange – Peers
  - e. Pink – School
  - f. Purple – Community

### **Closure/Wrap-up:**

### **\*\*Focus Exercise\*\* - Breck's Theater Warm Up (5:00-5:05)**

M. Share skits with the group (5:05-5:20)

N. Connection charts (5:20-5:35)

- a.  $G \leftrightarrow I$ ;  $I \leftrightarrow R$ ;  $G \leftrightarrow R$
- b. Reflection on previous 2 weeks (*may recap altogether at end with connection charts*)
  - i. Recap on what girls have learned
  - ii. Turn to a shoulder partner. Partner A explain what we learned the first week.
    - 1. Have girls share with group.

## Resilience

- iii. Now Partner B explain what we talked about last week.
- O. Revisit Mission Statement
  - a. Do you want to add or change anything? How can we tie in resilience to what we already have?

### Other Activities:

#### 10 Things to Do to Become Resilient

- A. Why is important for leaders to become resilient?
  - a. Look at 10 Things to Do to Become Resilient chart in journal
    - i. Go over each with the girls

#### Activity: "What If..." – Mind Map

- A. "What If..." – Create own Mind Map
  - a. Starter page in journal
  - b. Develop on own paper to take home
- B. Think about "What if failure wasn't a bad thing? What if they fear of failure didn't exist? What would you do? Who would you be? What would you invent or create?"
  - a. You are going to create your own "mind map." Here is an example of one. *Show example.*
  - b. A "mind map" is a collection of all of your thoughts, ideas, and dreams that you have if you truly believed you can do anything you set your mind to without fear of failure.
    - i. Notice how one thought, dream or desire leads to another.
  - c. On page 22 of your journal there is a starter map. You can use this to help you get started, but I am giving you each a blank piece of paper to create your mind map however you want. You will be able to take this one home this afternoon.

Appendix I4  
Love and Loyalty (Week Four) Lesson Plan

## Love & Loyalty

**Picture Book:** *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon* by

**Objective:** Understand the importance of taking care of yourself and staying true to you

### Whole Group

**Snacks, Hangout, Icebreaker (2:50-3:00/05)**

- A. Focus Exercise
  - a. Lay down, deep breaths, confidence stance

**Aspire to Be Mirror Activity (3:05-3:20)**

- B. Girls will take a look at themselves in the mirror and think about who or what they aspire to be
  - a. Take a look in the mirror and take one deep breath
  - b. They will write down the first thought that comes to mind
  - c. Think about those women in your environment levels
    - i. Not necessarily, "I aspire to be...Taylor Swift."
  - d. How do you want to see yourself? How do you want to be perceived by others?
  - e. *Have this be a quiet time with music playing*

**What does "Love & Loyalty" mean?**

- C. Our theme for this week is love and loyalty. The kind of love we will discuss today is "self-love." What does it mean to love yourself and appreciate who you are? It is important for leaders to take care of themselves in order for them to care for others.
  - a. One of you mentioned that a few weeks ago.
  - b. We will also talk about what it means to be loyal to yourself – to stay true to who you are. Loyalty is your support, commitment, or faithfulness to something. Leaders must remain loyal to themselves and their values.
    - i. Loyalty also contributes to our integrity.
      - 1. If you are going to be true and loyal to the values that are important to you and to different things you are a part of, you must be true to yourself
      - 2. \*\*What is on the outside must match what's on the inside\*\*

**Story Time (3:20-3:35)**

- D. We are going to read the book *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon*. Molly has several things that are different about her. At first, she doesn't think they are a big deal, but then she moves to a new school. Notice how she responds to the things about herself when others point out her differences. How does she carry herself?
- E. Read *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon*
  - a. Discussion Questions:
    - i. How did her grandmother help her see what made her unique differently?
      - 1. She could have seen them as ugly, negative things, but her grandmother helped her see them in a positive way (Growth Mindset)
    - ii. Would you say that Molly Lou was resilient?
      - 1. Why or why not?



## Love & Loyalty

- a. She didn't let others' comments or her "deficiencies" bring her down
  - iii. What were some of the things that Molly Lou didn't like about herself?
  - iv. Are there things you don't like about yourself?
    - 1. How can you view them as good and beautiful things?
- Sayings – what would you change & which resonated with you? (3:35-3:45)**
- F. Have each of the grandmother's 4 sayings on a piece of chart paper hanging in the four corners of the room
  - a. I want you to think about that one thing you would change about yourself. Why would you change it? Why do you think it's not a good or beautiful thing?
  - b. Pick one of the quotes from the grandmother that really speaks to you. How does it help you see what you would change about yourself in a more positive way?
    - i. Give each girl a sticky note and have her write down what she would change about herself & why but also which quote speaks to her seeing it differently.
    - ii. Go to the corner of the room where the quote that resonated with you is hanging. Put your sticky note on the chart paper.
      - 1. Discuss with the other girls at that station. You can share as much or as little as you want.
- G. Show Dove Evolution Video
- H. You cannot truly love others and show kindness to them without loving yourself and being kind and respectful to you.
  - a. Leaders need to respect themselves as well as others
  - b. They must take care of themselves.

### **I Am Pennant (3:45-4:00)**

- I. Each girl will create an "I Am" pennant about herself.
  - a. Think about what is special about you. You are all special and beautiful. Write positive & empowering things about yourself on the pennant.
    - i. What good qualities do you have?
    - ii. What do you love about yourself?
    - iii. Who are you?
    - iv. What are some words you would use to describe yourself?
  - b. Break into stations around room

### **Small Group**

### **Icebreaker – Skittles "I am a girl leader who..." (4:00-4:10)**

- J. Each girl will get three skittles
  - a. Whatever three colors she has, give her a piece of paper corresponding to the skittle color
  - b. Each color has a prompt
    - i. I am a girl leader who...
      - 1. Red – LOVES
      - 2. Yellow – IS INSPIRED BY

## Love & Loyalty

3. Green – IS HAPPIEST WHEN
  4. Purple – GETS DISAPPOINTED BY
  5. Orange – BELIEVES IN
- c. Have each girl complete her three pieces and then share with the group. They should read the sentence starter each time (“I am a girl leader who...”)
- K. *\*Be sure to give girls drops for completing integrity tasks & have them write positive things for other girls in their group\**

### **Journal Activity: Let’s Celebrate! (4:10-4:20)**

- L. It is important for us to give ourselves praise and celebrate even the small moments! Turn to page 26 in your journal. Reflect on the goals that you set for yourself on the first week.
- a. What accomplishments have you made?
  - b. Give yourself praise for the steps you have taken and the challenges you have overcome or are working through.

### **Journal Activity: Staying True to Your Values (4:20-4:30)**

- M. Now turn to the next page. Look back at the 5 values that were most important to you from week 2.
- a. Look at each value specifically and think about what each of them mean to you personally.
  - b. How do you stay true to your values in your everyday life? How can you work on being better about staying true to your values?
- N. Part of loving yourself and staying true to you is being able to maintain positive emotions and knowing how and when to control our emotions
- a. When we are in a positive setting with a positive mindset, it’s easy to think of ways to praise ourselves and look at our accomplishments.
  - b. But what about the moments when we feel stressed, overwhelmed, unsure? How do we deal with our anger or hurt? Sometimes we need to take a mindful snack.

## **Independent**

### **A Mindful Snack (4:30-4:45)**

- O. Look at the circle of different emotions on page 28 in your journal.
- a. Take a moment and think about what makes you feel these different emotions.
  - b. Now, what are some positive things you can do when you experience each of these emotions?
    - i. How can you remain calm when you get upset, angry, or sad?
    - ii. Maybe you need to take deep breaths, walk away from the situation, journal, draw, go outside for fresh air.
    - iii. Discuss each emotion as a group, but have girls write down what they know will work for them or what they might like to try.

### **Girl Wheel (4:45-5:10)**

- P. There are different parts of ourselves that we must take care of. We are going to create a Girl Wheel and discuss the five different areas of yourself that need care. These include: Brain, Heart, Social, Body, and Spirit

## Love & Loyalty

- a. Go through each of the five areas and discuss ways that you can show love take care of yourself in regard to the brain, heart, social (this could be emotions, interactions with others), body, and spirit
  - b. Girls will write down specific ways on each of the “petals”
  - c. Create their own girl wheel
- Q. \*\*If time: each group may be given one area and asked to come up with a skit

### **Closure/Wrap-up**

**\*\*Brain Break\*\***

- R. Share skits if time allowed in small groups

#### ***Relating to G, I, and R (5:10-5:20)***

- S. Split into groups of 4 – give each group a piece of paper & have them come up with 2-3 good ways that loving yourself and staying true to you relates to growth mindset, integrity, and resilience
- T. Revisit Mission Statement

#### ***Mirror Activity (5:20-5:35)***

- U. Each girl will take another look at herself in the mirror. This time she will write down the first word or phrase that comes to mind.
  - a. Don't overthink it. Your first initial thought when you see yourself.

#### **Other Activities:**

- Self-Compassion Discussion Cards

## Appendix I5 Strengths (Week Five) Lesson Plan

# Strengths

**Picture Book:** *Red: A Crayon's Story* by Michael Hall

**Objective:** Discover their own strengths, how to effectively practice them, and appreciate the strengths of others

### Whole Group

**Snacks, Hangout, Icebreaker (2:50-3:10)**

- \*\*Take group pic & get developed
- Ticktock (group activity)

**What are strengths and weaknesses?**

- A. What is the difference between a strength and a weakness?
  - a. Are weaknesses bad things?
  - b. Are we strong in every area?
- B. Rare for someone to accomplish great things all by herself
  - a. Everyone has something to contribute
  - b. Teams need diverse perspectives, skills, and talents
  - c. We all have something to give

**Story Time**

- C. Read *Red: A Crayon's Story*
  - a. Discussion & Follow-up Questions
  - b. Today we are going to focus on our strengths & what makes you stand out – what you have to contribute!

**Leadership Style Assessment**

- D. Take Leadership Style Assessment
- E. Regroup into color groups

### Small Group

**Strengths & Weaknesses Cards Activity**

**Discussion & Journal Activity**

- F. Discussion about particular leadership style
  - i. What are the greatest strengths of our leadership style?
  - ii. What good qualities do others see in us?
  - iii. What circumstances, situations, or roles do we thrive as a leader?
  - iv. What group roles are we best suited for?
  - v. How do you think the different styles work with each other?
  - vi. What are some challenges of this leadership style?
  - vii. What are some negative ways others might view our leadership style?
  - viii. In what ways might our approach to leadership be a challenge for people with other leadership styles?
- G. Look at the other 3 types of leadership.
  - i. Read over their descriptions.
  - ii. How can we integrate the different leadership styles in a team dynamic?

**Journal Activity – My Strengths**

- H. Journal Activity: write down 6 strengths you have
  - i. Based on the discussion we just had about our leadership style, what are some of your areas of strength?

## Strengths

1. Write six of what you believe to be your top strengths in your journal.
- ii. How can you apply those strengths in each of your environment levels?  
(Resilience)

### Independent

#### Tree of Strengths

- H. Create Tree of Strengths
  - i. Add 6 from journal + more
  - ii. Select one strength to add to the whole group Tree of Strengths

#### Journal Activity: I Am Poem

- As you finish up your strengths tree, turn to page (#) in your journal and start to work on your "I Am" poem

### Small Group

#### Prep for Parent Reception:

- A. Return to original small groups
- B. Each group will create a visual representation (poster) and skit to display the five aspects of leadership covered in the program.
  - a. Green Group – Growth Mindset
  - b. Blue Group – Integrity
  - c. Orange Group – Resilience
  - d. Pink Group – Love & Loyalty
  - e. Purple Group – Strengths
- C. \*\*Have girls take post-assessment\*\*

### Closure/Wrap-Up

#### LEADER Acrostic Poem

- A. As a group, the girls will develop an acrostic poem of leadership
  - a. An acrostic poem is one form of poetry. This type of poem is one where the first letter of each line spells out a word or phrase. We are going to create an acrostic poem out of the word "Leader"
  - b. Each letter will represent either a characteristic/trait of a leader, what it means to be a leader, ways to show leadership, etc.
  - c. It does not have to rhyme
  - d. As I go through each letter, name some ways we can be leaders that start with each letter

#### We Can, We Are, We Will

- B. Divide girls into groups
  - a. Have each group come up with a "We Can, We Are, and We Will" statement
  - b. Write down all of the groups answers on chart paper

#### What does "leader" mean to you?

- Have girls write their definition of a leader on a sticky note and post on chart paper
  - What is your definition of a leader?
  - What skills, qualities, abilities do they have?
  - Do all leaders look the same?

## Strengths

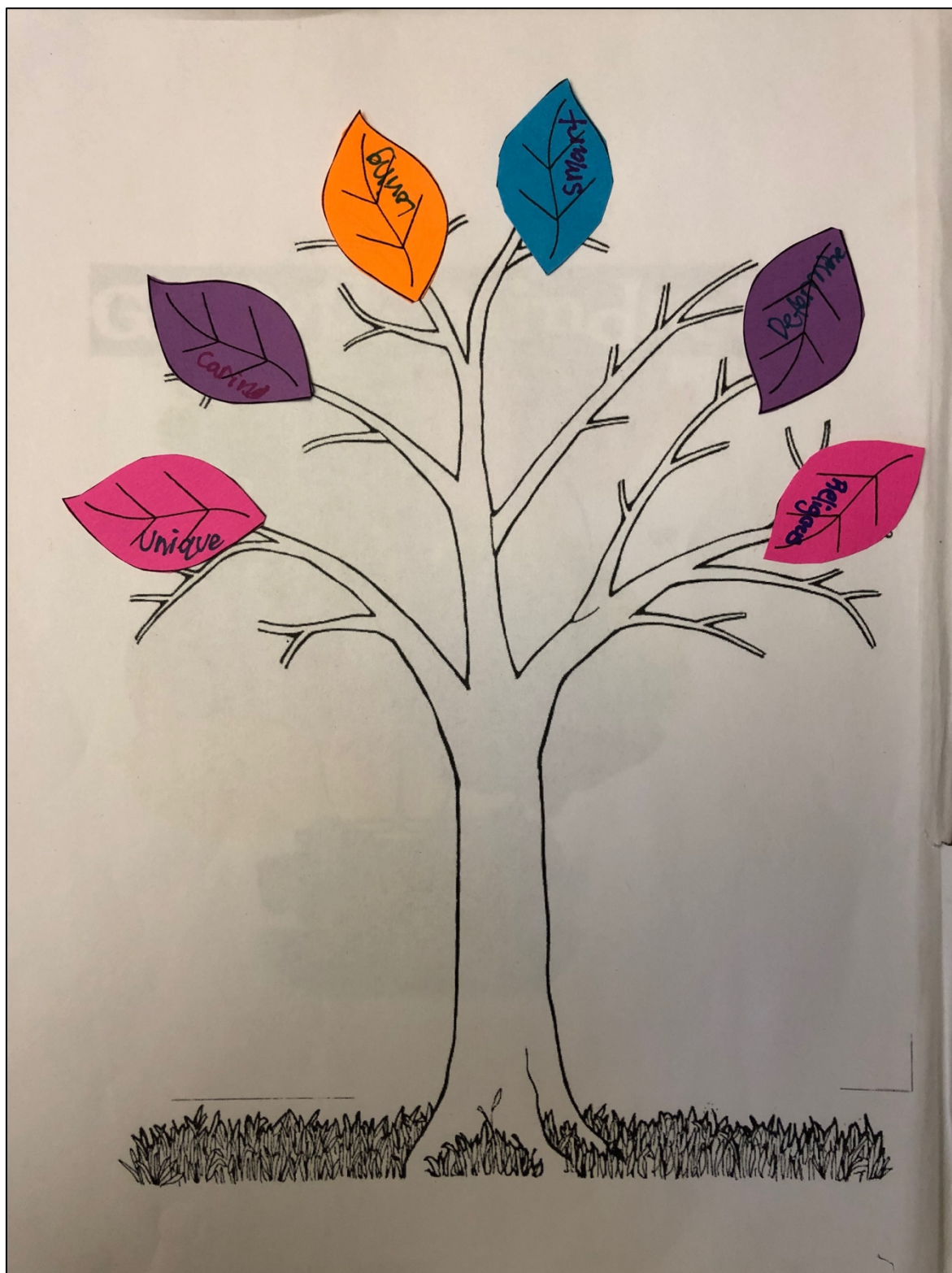
- Do they all possess the same qualities?

### **Self-Reflection & Dinner:**

#### **Parent Reception:**

- 3:00-6:00 p.m. – **GIRLS: *Leaders on the Rise***
- 6:00 p.m. – Parent Reception/Refreshments
  - Opening remarks – Dr. Elsass (Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Seifritz)
- 6:05-10 – Girls come into library in their small groups
  - Sophia speaks to parents
- 6:15 – Small groups share visual representation (posters) and skits of five aspects
  - Green Group – Growth Mindset
  - Blue Group – Integrity
  - Orange Group – Resilience
  - Pink Group – Love & Loyalty
  - Purple Group – Strengths
- 6:30(ish) – Video/Slideshow
- 6:35 – Present certificates to participants
- 6:45 – Closing remarks

Appendix J  
"Tree of Strengths"



Appendix K  
*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment* Pre-intervention and Post-intervention Average  
 Scores

<b><u>Participant</u></b>	<b><u>Pre-Assessment Score</u></b>	<b><u>Post-Assessment Score</u></b>
Participant 1	4.2	4.175
Participant 2	4.325	4.60319149
Participant 3	4.4	4.375
Participant 4	4.275	3.85
Participant 5	4.05	4.575
Participant 6	4.05	4.5
Participant 7	4	4.25
Participant 8	4.85	4.825
Participant 9	3.23297872	3.69255319
Participant 10	4.37287234	4.33882979
Participant 11	4.05	4.375
Participant 12	4.375	4.275
Participant 13	4.50888889	4.5
Participant 14	4	4.125
Participant 15	4.02074468	4.55
Participant 16	3.7	4.325
Participant 17	3.93138298	3.93478261
Participant 18	3.8	3.93617021
Participant 19	4.425	4.03457447
Participant 20	4.15319149	4.25
Participant 21	4.3	4.275
Participant 22	4.25	4.4
Participant 23	3.25888889	3.90978261
Participant 24	3.9	4.23586957
Participant 25	4.5	4.425
Participant 26	4.225	4.525
Participant 27	3.90654487	3.475
Participant 28	4.2	4.09402174
Participant 29	4.45	4.475
Participant 30	3.775	4.175
Participant 31	4.225	3.825
Participant 32	3.85	4.35
Participant 33	4.275	4.575
Participant 34	4.6	4.6
Participant 35	4.30425532	4.525
Participant 36	3.55888889	3.9301457
Participant 37	4.275	4.225
Participant 38	4.0076087	4.525
Participant 39	3.975	4.475
Participant 40	4.275	4.45
Participant 41	4.525	4.575



Participant 42	3.9	4.425
Participant 43	3.975	3.825
Participant 44	3.6	3.55
Participant 45	3.775	3.325
Participant 46	4.15	4.35
Participant 47	3.5	3.45
Participant 48	4.525	4.8

Appendix L  
Complete Record of Small Group Mentor Leaders' Anecdotal Notes

<b>Growth Mindset</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, January 29, 2019</b>			
<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Notes</u>
2:40-3:10	Snacks/Hangout	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The girls were shy, but more open than the 6th graders were.</li> </ul>
3:10-3:15	Program Introduction and Overview	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The girls seemed very excited about what they were going to learn</li> </ul>
3:15-3:40	Introduce Growth Mindset; Storytime; Growth Mindset Poster	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The girls loved the story</li> </ul>
3:40-3:50	Icebreakers in SGs	Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very open in sharing</li> <li>Lots of questions</li> <li>Girls were super shy at first</li> <li>Had two best friends in my group which made it a challenge to get everyone to interact with each member of the group</li> <li>Not everyone knew each other</li> <li>Very engaged and having a really fun time</li> <li>All very comfortable with each other</li> <li>Very ambitious (engineer, inventor, teacher, surgeon)</li> </ul>

3:50-4:10	Creating a Magnificent Thing	Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All jumped in at first was difficult to grasp idea of one thing to make</li> <li>• Mac wanted to be in charge of whole group – had to jump in and hone in on topic half way through</li> <li>• Some girls stepped away</li> <li>• Girls LOVED this- really helped them open up with each other and become more comfortable in the group</li> <li>• Fun activity: tallest thing</li> <li>• Plan it out before starting to create something better</li> <li>• Worked good together</li> <li>• Great feedback: they loved it!</li> <li>• Distracted but for the most part very engaged and worked together</li> <li>• Very excited/loved activity</li> <li>• Agreed in reflection that they could've planned better</li> <li>• "Think outside of the box"</li> </ul>
4:10-4:45	Growth Mindset Escape Room	Independent in Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split into 3 groups- 2 worked together great and had no issues; one group really struggled and wanted to give up on the activity</li> </ul>
4:45-5:15	Goal Setting	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• had thoughtful and specific goals</li> <li>• Spent a lot of time thinking of goals!! I'm glad they did!</li> <li>• Understood the concept/activity</li> <li>• Examples:</li> <li>• Create art pieces</li> <li>• Better at handwriting</li> <li>• NASA engineer</li> <li>• Practice archery</li> <li>• Veterinarian</li> <li>• Worked diligently to complete their goals</li> <li>• Very ambitious girls</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Want to read, get good grades, achieve long term goals</li></ul>
5:15-5:40	4 quotes from Escape Room, Mission Statement	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One of the girls in my group really loved this activity- got really into it and said at the end of the 5 weeks this was her favorite activity we did!</li><li>• Some asked to do it again:) successful!</li></ul>
5:40	Self-Reflection & Dinner	Independent	

<b>Integrity</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, February 5, 2019</b>			
<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Notes</u>
2:50-3:00/05	Snacks/Hangout	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excited to be back</li> </ul>
3:05-3:10	Community Builder	Whole Group	
3:10-3:25	Introduce Integrity (Umbrella) + 5 Fundamental Values Groups	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well overall</li> <li>A few girls were chatty</li> <li>Totally different group compared to first week- the best friend issue had dissolved and all the girls were becoming great friends as a whole group</li> </ul>
3:25-4:00	Storytime; Create Own Bucket; Building Relationships	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal style</li> <li>Good! Girls loved being creative</li> <li>My girls really loved getting to write each other notes every weekend- responded extremely well to completing tasks on the sheet to get the number handout that corresponded to that</li> <li>Very into it</li> <li>Loved expressing creativity</li> </ul>
3:45/50-4:00	Friendship Cards	Small Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls shared</li> <li>Some girls were impatient but their responses were good!</li> <li>My group was restless with this activity and we had to remind them to focus several times</li> </ul>

4:00-4:10	Journal Activity (3 ways to fill & dip)	Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls already knew about this concept through school so they weren't as excited to complete the journal pages about it- but they did a great job filling it out once they got going</li> </ul>
4:10-4:35	What are your values?	Independent in Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most girls chose family or friends</li> <li>Many girls had never thought about what they truly value, good for them to evaluate</li> </ul>
4:35-5:00	Wonder Precepts Scenarios	Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls LOVED the skits- favorite part of their week every week!!</li> <li>Precepts were a great idea, everyone had seen the movie Wonder</li> <li>The Skits really brought the girls together and made them work as a team. They loved performing it to us leaders as well.</li> </ul>
5:05-5:20	Share Scenarios with whole group	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls get a good laugh and love supporting their peers in skits!</li> </ul>
5:20-5:35/40	Precepts Reflection (if time); "Let your life speak" sticky note chart; Self-Reflection	Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many girls were in a hurry to eat dinner so they did not spend much time on this!</li> </ul>

<b>Resilience</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, February 12, 2019</b>			
<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Notes</u>
2:50-3:00/05	Snacks/Hangout	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is when the girls really started to open up and come talk to the leaders. There was definitely a connection forming by this time.</li> </ul>
3:05-3:20	Community Builder - Tennis Ball Activity	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helped some girls speak and step out of their comfort zone!</li> </ul>
3:20-3:40	Introduce Resilience with Tennis Ball + Story Time	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Though molly lou melon was hilarious! Girls kept talking about it</li> </ul>
3:40-3:50	"I Am..., I Can..., I Have..."	Small Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>had amazing responses for this activity</li> <li>Girls were so willing to share</li> <li>Had lots of questions about what to write</li> <li>Didn't want to share their answers</li> </ul>
3:50-4:10	Character Study	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some were really involved and wanted to learn</li> <li>Working well together was shy but Chloe and Cat shared their tasks</li> <li>Girls liked it I think but this was the only activity that my group didn't want to share</li> <li>Need more time for activities</li> </ul>
4:10-4:20	Journal Activity: Overcoming Challenges	Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hardest activity to get the girls to focus on and complete</li> </ul>

4:20-4:35	Overcoming Obstacles Social Media Post	Independent in Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls wanted to draw and color more than write facts. We as leaders just had to help them refocus:)</li> <li>Very excited about both</li> <li>Made them very colorful</li> <li>"I am a leader who's assertive and shows kindness and bravery in the face of a problem."</li> </ul>
4:35-5:00	Environmental Levels Skits	Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best skit my group did throughout the program because I feel this was the week they learned the most!</li> <li>All groups wanted to go first</li> </ul>
5:05-5:20	Share Scenarios with whole group	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My small group loves a good skit! I think this is a great way for them to apply their knowledge</li> </ul>
5:20-5:35/40	Connection Chart + Self-Reflection	Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some girls struggle with self reflection maybe it was because they wanted to socialize more than they wanted to focus</li> </ul>
	Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoe responded really well to integrity goal sheet and completed a lot of the goals on the list</li> </ul>



<b>Love &amp; Loyalty</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, February 19, 2019</b>			
<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Notes</u>
2:50-3:00/05	Self-Neighbor + Breathing Exercise	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls loved this game!!</li> </ul>
3:20-3:35	What does "Love" & "Loyalty" Mean? + Story Time	Whole Group	
3:35-3:45	4 quotes from <i>Molly Lou Melon</i> & What would you change?	Whole Group/ Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changing up the groups was nice! I loved hearing the why behind choosing the quote!</li> </ul>
3:45-4:00	I Am Pennant	Whole Group/ Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls were so creative</li> <li>The Girls really had to think about what they could put on their pennant, so it was a thought provoking activity. The Girls also love making them.</li> </ul>
4:00-4:10	Skittles Icebreaker	Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loved it because they got to eat the skittles at the end;)</li> </ul>
4:10-4:20	Journal Activity: Let's Celebrate!	Independent in Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls usually become tired around this time and rush through writing in their journals</li> </ul>
4:20-4:30	Journal Activity: Staying True to Your Values	Independent in Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>two girl in my group said she liked how the activities in the program tied to each other from the previous weeks- shared her values she picked in week two and how she has stayed true to them over the past two weeks</li> </ul>

4:30-4:45	A Mindful Snack	Small Groups	
4:45-5:10	Girl Wheel	Independent in Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loved the wheel and enjoyed getting to be creativity with a craft</li> <li>• This was my groups favorite craft! It went really well</li> </ul>
5:10-5:20	Group Work - Relating to G, I, & R	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only a few girls spoke about connecting the weeks, but I think it helped wheels start to turn in other girls minds!</li> </ul>
5:20-5:35	Aspire to Be Mirror Activity + Self-Reflection	Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls were super super shy looking in the mirror!!</li> <li>• There were the very shy girls who said their thoughts in their mind, but there were other girls who would be sassy and confident too.</li> </ul>

<b>Strengths</b> <b>Day: Tuesday, February 26, 2019</b>			
<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Notes</u>
2:50-3:15	Snacks/Picture/Sign Frames/Oreo Challenge	Whole Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The oreo game was a big hit!</li> </ul>
3:15-3:30	Strengths & Weaknesses + Storytime	Whole Group	
3:30-40	Leadership Assessment	Whole Group/Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some did not finish because they worked a little slower. I think many girls enjoyed taking this assessment because it seemed new to many girls.</li> </ul>
3:40-3:55	Leadership Style Group Discussion + Strengths Cards Activity	Small Group (Leadership Group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responded well to this activity- girls also picked their weaknesses from the cards and we talked about how we could improve them (thought that was so cool because who wants to admit they have weaknesses)!!!</li> <li>Went well overall, a few girls had a hard time knowing their own personal strengths and weaknesses</li> </ul>
3:55-4:20	Tree of Strengths + Puzzle Piece + I Am Poem (if time)	Independent in Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls liked getting to be in a group with different girls- liked creating another craft</li> </ul>
4:30-5:10	Color Group Small Groups - make visual chart + skit	Small Groups (Original)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls were restless and ready to see their parents, harder to focus in but girls did well!</li> <li>Always good at working together</li> </ul>

5:30-5:40	What does "leader" mean to you? + Self-Reflection	Whole Group/ Independent	
	Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of them work better together than the first day</li> <li>• More conversation between them too</li> </ul>

## Appendix M

*Empowering Preadolescent Girls Assessment Clustered by Areas Monitored in Study*

<b><u>Confidence</u></b>	<b><u>Self-Concept</u></b>	<b><u>Leadership</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (3) I set goals for myself.</li> <li>• (4) I feel confident in my abilities to achieve the things I set my mind to.</li> <li>• (5) I think about new activities or projects I would like to try.</li> <li>• (6) I make plans for the future.</li> <li>• (7) I can stand up to my friends when they are doing something wrong.</li> <li>• (11) I am willing to stand up for a friend being picked on.</li> <li>• (12) I can make a difference in my community.</li> <li>• (13) I can make a difference in my school.</li> <li>• (14) I feel confident that I can handle whatever comes my way.</li> <li>• (18) I am afraid to have an unpopular opinion.</li> <li>• (20) I worry about what people are thinking about me.</li> <li>• (21) How I feel about myself depends on what others think of me.</li> <li>• (23) I am confident.</li> <li>• (25) Overall, I feel good about my abilities compared to others (e.g. at school, playing sports or socially).</li> <li>• (26) I feel that I am a valuable person who has a lot to offer.</li> <li>• (34) I enjoy reading.</li> <li>• (37) I feel empowered by the characters I read about.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (1) No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it.</li> <li>• (2) Anyone can learn anything if they work hard.</li> <li>• (8) I think I make good decisions.</li> <li>• (9) I am able to stand up for myself &amp; what I believe in.</li> <li>• (10) I know my values and what is important for myself.</li> <li>• (15) I look for what I can learn out of bad things that happen.</li> <li>• (16) I feel stronger because of the problems I have faced.</li> <li>• (17) If I have a problem, I can work it out.</li> <li>• (19) I am happy with who I am.</li> <li>• (22) I feel I can be myself around other people.</li> <li>• (24) I feel pressured to do things because my friends do them.</li> <li>• (35) I like to read about characters that I can identify with in my own life.</li> <li>• (36) The characters I read about help me discover who I am.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (27) Leadership comes in various forms and spans multiple dimensions.</li> <li>• (28) Women can be leaders in any career they choose.</li> <li>• (29) Men and women are equally respected as leaders.</li> <li>• (30) I see myself as a leader.</li> <li>• (31) I am capable of becoming a leader.</li> <li>• (32) I have leadership skills.</li> <li>• (33) Developing as a leader is challenging.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (38) I feel comfortable sharing my personal thoughts with others.</li><li>• (39) I have a mentor that I look up to.</li><li>• (40) I have a mentor that I trust.</li></ul>		
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Appendix N  
Parent and/or Guardian Survey Pre-intervention and Post-intervention Average Scores

<b><u>Parent and/or Guardian</u></b>	<b><u>Pre-Intervention Survey Score</u></b>	<b><u>Post-Intervention Survey Score</u></b>
Parent 1	3.714285714	3.928571429
Parent 2	4.428571429	4.571428571
Parent 3	4.071428571	4.857142857
Parent 4	4	4.714285714
Parent 5	3.214285714	3.5
Parent 6	3.5	3.928571429
Parent 7	3.214285714	4.071428571
Parent 8	3.714285714	4.428571429
Parent 9	3.357142857	3.428571429
Parent 10	4.571428571	4.857142857
Parent 11	3.164835165	3.714285714
Parent 12	4.357142857	4.357142857
Parent 13	4.642857143	4.25
Parent 14	3	3.428571429
Parent 15	3.357142857	3.785714286
Parent 16	3.214285714	3.928571429
Parent 17	3.928571429	4.142857143
Parent 18	3.785714286	4.785714286
Parent 19	4.5	4.5
Parent 20	3.714285714	4.285714286
Parent 21	4	4.214285714
Parent 22	3.442307692	4.071428571
Parent 23	4.357142857	4.142857143
Parent 24	4.214285714	4.285714286
Parent 25	3.857142857	4.214285714
Parent 26	4.357142857	4.142857143
Parent 27	4.071428571	4

Appendix O  
t-test Results

Participant Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Results		
t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		$\alpha = 0.01$
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.099609287	4.2345817
Variance	0.115068848	0.12449604
Observations	48	48
Pearson Correlation	0.645663481	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	47	
t Stat	-3.207301677	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.001206411	
t Critical one-tail	2.40834505	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.002412822	
t Critical two-tail	2.684555618	

Fifth-grade Participant Pre-assessment and Post-Assessment Results		
t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		$\alpha = 0.05$
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.11644617	4.24392056
Variance	0.1206986	0.08988456
Observations	28	28
Pearson Correlation	0.58542472	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	27	
t Stat	-2.2657538	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.01584817	
t Critical one-tail	1.70328845	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.03169634	
t Critical two-tail	2.05183052	



Sixth-grade Participant Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Results		
<i>t</i> -Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		$\alpha = 0.05$
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.07603765	4.22150728
Variance	0.1121223	0.17992474
Observations	20	20
Pearson Correlation	0.73191824	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	19	
<i>t</i> Stat	-2.2428716	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.01851287	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.72913281	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.03702575	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	2.09302405	

Confidence Statements Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Results		
<i>t</i> -Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		$\alpha = 0.01$
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.003825547	4.13025555
Variance	0.248698049	0.29027539
Observations	20	20
Pearson Correlation	0.965310344	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	19	
<i>t</i> Stat	-3.973590763	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000406918	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	2.539483191	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000813837	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	2.860934606	

Self-Concept Statements Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Results		
<i>t</i> -Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		$\alpha = 0.01$
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.132062648	4.30789689
Variance	0.197157884	0.21665523
Observations	13	13
Pearson Correlation	0.907233126	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	12	
<i>t</i> Stat	- 3.218331462	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.003688641	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	2.680997993	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.007377283	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	3.054539589	

Leadership Statements Pre-assessment and Post-assessment Results		
<i>t</i> -Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		$\alpha = 0.01$
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.313006586	4.396499604
Variance	0.40275187	0.524967936
Observations	7	7
Pearson Correlation	0.950154542	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	6	
<i>t</i> Stat	-0.95126991	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.189098656	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	3.142668403	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.378197312	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	3.707428021	

Parent and/or Guardians Pre-intervention and Post-intervention Survey Results		
<i>t</i> -Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		$\alpha = 0.01$
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	3.842592593	4.167989418
Variance	0.238333938	0.159911187
Observations	27	27
Pearson Correlation	0.693963989	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	26	
<i>t</i> Stat	-4.739146162	
P(T<=t) one-tail	3.34559E-05	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	2.478629824	
P(T<=t) two-tail	6.69118E-05	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	2.778714533	